

Population Profile 2026

An overview of the population of Gloucestershire
by the nine protected characteristics set out in
the Equality Act 2010

Produced by the Data, Analysis & Insights Team

InformGloucestershire

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Executive summary

Our population profile provides an overview of the population of Gloucestershire by nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race¹, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnerships.

This profile summarises the main trends at county and district level and is intended to strengthen our evidence base across the protected characteristics.

Gloucestershire has a lower proportion of 0-15 year olds and 16-64 year olds when compared to the national figure, whilst the proportion of people aged 65+ exceeds the national figure. As is the case in many parts of the UK, the number and proportion of older people in the county have increased over the last 10 years. Projections suggest this trend will continue, with the number of people aged 65+ projected to increase by approximately 62,000 or 43.4% between 2022 and 2047.

Gloucestershire's ageing population has financial and resource implications, as people are more likely to require GCC adult care and other service support in older age. It will also have some benefits, as a result of the positive contribution older people make to society. Older people make up much of the formal volunteer workforce, delivering many services to other residents and they also provide most informal care to other older people.

Gloucestershire is characterised by a comparatively small population of ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities). The 2021 Census showed the population of ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities) accounted for 44,765 people or 6.9% of the population; this was much lower than the England percentage of 19.0%. The population of Gloucestershire is, however, becoming increasingly diverse. The population of ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities) increased by 63.8% between 2011 and 2021, from 4.6% to 6.9% of the population. The number of people classed as 'other white', which includes migrants from Europe, increased by 55.1%, from 3.1% of the population in 2011 to 4.5% of the population in 2021.

According to the 2021 Census 16.8% of Gloucestershire residents reported having a long-term limiting health problem; this was below the national figure. As age increases the proportion of respondents reporting a limiting long-term health problem increases. Given the ageing population, the number of people with a limiting long-term health problem is likely to increase in the future.

Police recorded hate crime has been generally increasing in the county each year up until 2022/23, however there was an overall decrease of 9.4% in 2024/25 from the previous year; this compares to a slight increase nationally of 2.5%. In Gloucestershire, all of the five

¹ The government refers to ethnicity and not race; this is because surveys usually ask people for their ethnicity and not their race, and using consistent terms helps people to understand the data.

monitored hate crime strands showed a decrease in reporting in 2024/25. Race-related hate crime was the most recorded strand of hate crime in Gloucestershire by a large margin, with 826 recorded in 2024/25. This accounted for 67.3% of all reported hate crime in the county, although showed a 6.1% decrease in reporting on the previous year.

Section 1

What is the population profile (2026)?

The population profile provides a breakdown of the population of Gloucestershire by the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.² The protected characteristics are age, sex, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, civil partnership and marriage.

This report provides an update to the 2025 equality profile, and includes population projections and a breakdown of protected characteristics by broad age groups. It will help us to strengthen our evidence base across the protected characteristics.

Why we are publishing this report

Publishing equality information about the population as a whole helps decision makers to make informed decisions based on the needs of our communities and meet the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty that require the Council to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share the characteristic.

The information contained in the report is also useful to local voluntary and community sector organisations, current and potential contractors and other partners.

How we use the population profile

Our population profile helps us to understand our local population and their needs. This understanding helps us shape and make improvements to our services so that they best meet the needs of all of the different communities living within the county.

² Equality Act 2010. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15>

What other equality information do we use

We use a range of equality information when we develop policies, set strategies, design and deliver our services. This includes information about our workforce and people affected by our policies and practices (service users).

Section 2

Age

In the UK, ageism is the most prevalent form of discrimination amongst all age groups, with one in three people experiencing age-based prejudice or discrimination.³

Age-based discrimination can have adverse effects on social cohesion, an individual's mental health, and wider determinants of health such as employment.⁴ According to the UK government, older people experience most age discrimination, although it also takes place against young people.⁵ Research from Age Without Limits states that at least a third of people hold ageist beliefs, and that nearly two thirds of people reported being treated or spoken to negatively because of their age since turning 50.⁶

The age of an individual, combined with additional factors including other 'protected characteristics' may affect their health and social care needs. World Health Organisation research shows that, in the health and social care sector, healthcare rationing on the basis of age is widespread, and older adults tend to be excluded from research and data collection efforts.⁷ In addition, although many older people are early adopters of digital technologies, for some groups of older people there is a high risk of digital exclusion from a wide range of essential services and activities, including aspects of healthcare, local authority services and benefits, and banking.⁸

Current Population

In 2024, the resident population of Gloucestershire was estimated at 669,380 people, of which:

- 17.5% were aged 0-15;
- 60.4% were aged 16-64;
- 22.1% were aged 65 and over.

Gloucestershire has a lower proportion of 0-15 year olds and 16-64 year olds and a higher proportion of people aged 65+ when compared to England.

³ Centre for Ageing Better, "Challenging ageism: A guide to talking about ageing and older age" <https://ageing-better.org.uk/resources/challenging-ageism-guide-talking-about-ageing-and-older-age> Accessed 12/01/2026

⁴ Centre for Ageing Better, "Ageism: What's the harm?" [Ageism-harms.pdf](#) Accessed 29/01/2026

⁵ nidirect: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/age-discrimination>

⁶ Age Without Limits, [Ageism key stats & facts | Age without limits](#)

⁷ World Health Organisation, Global Report on Ageism (2021)

<https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/71ad96a0-d29a-4457-9d54-52029c24c76c/content>

⁸ House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee, [The rights of older people](#) Accessed 29/01/2026

There is some variation at district level:

- at 19.1% and 18.9% respectively, Gloucester and Tewkesbury have the highest proportion of children and young people (aged 0-15) and exceed the county and national figures.
- Gloucester also has the highest proportion of people aged 16-64 (64.0%), exceeding the county and national figures. Cheltenham exceeds the county average with 62.8%.
- Cotswold, Forest of Dean and Stroud all have a higher proportion of people aged 65+ when compared to the county and national figures. At 27.5% Cotswold has the largest proportion of people aged 65 and over.

Table 1: Gloucestershire population by broad age group, 2024⁹

	Number of people	% of population		
		0-15	16-64	65+
Cheltenham	121,739	17.4	62.8	19.8
Cotswold	91,661	15.7	56.8	27.5
Forest of Dean	89,753	16.1	58.3	25.6
Gloucester	138,598	19.1	64.0	16.9
Stroud	125,680	17.0	59.1	23.9
Tewkesbury	101,949	18.9	59.2	22.0
Gloucestershire	669,380	17.5	60.4	22.1
England	58,620,101	18.4	62.9	18.7

Population change (2014-2024)¹⁰

Gloucestershire’s population has increased by approximately 58,049 people or 9.5% since 2014. The percentage increase is higher than the increase experienced in both the South West (8.6%), and England (7.8%).

During this period the number of children and young people (0-15 year olds) in Gloucestershire increased by 8,349 people or 7.7%. This is greater than the increase seen in both the South West and England, of 3.8% and 5.0% respectively. Gloucestershire’s population of 16-64 year olds increased by 25,277 people or 6.7%. This was broadly in line with the national increase of 6.5%. The greatest growth was in the 65+ age group which

⁹ ONS Mid Year Estimates 2024, www.nomisweb.co.uk

¹⁰ ONS Mid Year Population Estimates 2024, and rebased Estimates 2014, www.nomisweb.co.uk accessed 23/09/2025

increased by 19.8% or 24,423 people. This growth was higher than the regional increase of 17.2%, and also higher than the national percentage increase of 15.5%.

There is considerable variation at district level:

- All districts saw an increase in the 0-15 year age group. Tewkesbury had a faster growth rate (26.7%) compared with England (5.0%), whilst Stroud experienced the smallest growth (3.9%).
- All districts saw an increase in the 16-64 year age group. Tewkesbury and Gloucester both experienced a faster growth rate (17.9% and 9.4% respectively) than in England (6.5%), whilst Cheltenham experienced the smallest growth (0.6%).
- All districts saw an increase in the 65+ age group. All districts except Cheltenham saw a larger percentage increase than England (15.1% and 15.5% respectively). Growth was highest in Cotswold (22.8%), followed by Stroud (21.6%) and Tewkesbury (21.1%).

Table 2: Population change in Gloucestershire, 2014-2024¹¹

	0-15			16-64			65+		
	Number of people		% change	Number of people		% change	Number of people		% change
	2014	2024	2014 to 2024	2014	2024	2014 to 2024	2014	2024	2014 to 2024
Cheltenham	20,085	21,139	5.2	76,050	76,476	0.6	20,959	24,124	15.1
Cotswold	13,854	14,419	4.1	50,296	52,068	3.5	20,506	25,174	22.8
Forest of Dean	13,803	14,424	4.5	50,381	52,360	3.9	19,193	22,969	19.7
Gloucester	25,209	26,459	5.0	81,159	88,748	9.4	19,799	23,391	18.1
Stroud	20,595	21,389	3.9	69,941	74,295	6.2	24,675	29,996	21.6
Tewkesbury	15,197	19,262	26.7	51,148	60,305	17.9	18,481	22,382	21.1
Gloucestershire	108,743	117,092	7.7	378,975	404,252	6.7	123,613	148,036	19.8
England	10,255,533	10,768,248	5.0	34,610,320	36,870,761	6.5	9,504,466	10,981,092	15.5

Future growth (2022-2047)¹²

Current projections suggest that, between 2022 and 2047, Gloucestershire’s population will increase by 113,929 people, or 17.5%, to around 766,595 people. This compares to a projected national increase of 12.7%.

Gloucestershire’s 65+ population is projected to experience the greatest growth, increasing by around 62,100 people, or 43.4%, between 2022 and 2047. Conversely, Gloucestershire’s 0-15 year old population is projected to decrease by around 5,400 people, or 4.7%, by 2047. The 16-64 year old population is projected to experience an increase of 14.5% or around 57,200 people.

¹¹ ONS Mid Year Population Estimates 2024, and rebased Estimates 2014

¹² ONS 2022-based Subnational Population Projections

[Population projections for local authorities by five-year age groups and sex, England - Office for National Statistics](#) Accessed 09/10/2025

At district level:

- Tewkesbury and Stroud are the only two districts projected to see the growth in 0-15 year olds, with Tewkesbury predicted to see the largest growth at 8.4%. All other districts are projected to see a decrease in this age group.
- The number of 16-64 year olds is projected to increase in all districts. Tewkesbury is projected to experience the greatest increase at a rate of 27.1%, whilst Cheltenham is projected to have the smallest increase at 8.0%.
- All districts are expected to experience an increase in the 65+ age group. The increase is projected to be highest in Tewkesbury (54.0%) and smallest in Forest of Dean (32.4%).

Table 3: Projected population change in Gloucestershire, 2022-2047¹³

	0-15			16-64			65+		
	Number of people		% change	Number of people		% change	Number of people		% change
	2022	2047	2022 to 2047	2022	2047	2022 to 2047	2022	2047	2022 to 2047
Cheltenham	20,845	17,452	-16.3%	75,322	81,314	8.0%	23,418	32,926	40.6%
Cotswold	14,619	14,550	-0.5%	52,509	59,933	14.1%	24,232	36,557	50.9%
Forest of Dean	14,083	13,396	-4.9%	51,599	57,648	11.7%	22,252	29,468	32.4%
Gloucester	25,612	22,084	-13.8%	85,361	93,129	9.1%	22,557	31,839	41.1%
Stroud	21,246	22,012	3.6%	73,078	87,514	19.8%	28,901	40,996	41.8%
Tewkesbury	17,974	19,475	8.4%	57,380	72,917	27.1%	21,678	33,384	54.0%
Gloucestershire	114,379	108,969	-4.7%	395,249	452,456	14.5%	143,038	205,169	43.4%
England	10,567,635	9,796,136	-7.3%	35,915,152	39,863,972	11.0%	10,629,755	14,728,779	38.6%

¹³ ONS 2022-based Subnational Population Projections

Outcomes by age

Analysis of the 2021 Census shows that Gloucestershire residents aged 65 or over were more likely than those under 65 to:

- have a disability under the Equality Act;
- be in poor health;
- be living on their own;
- be without access to a car;
- be providing unpaid care of 50 hours or more a week;
- be living in a household without central heating;

People aged 50 or over were more likely than those under 50 to:

- be living on their own;
- be providing unpaid care;
- have no qualifications.

All of the above are also reflected at a national level.

Table 4: Outcomes by age in Gloucestershire 2021¹⁴

	Gloucestershire		England	
	Under 65	65 or over	Under 65	65 or over
Health and disability				
% disabled under the Equality Act	12.7	31.7	13.3	35.2
% of people in bad or very bad health	2.9	9.8	3.5	12.6
Isolation				
% of people without access to a car or van	8.5	16.8	16.7	22.7
% of people living on their own	8.9	29.8	8.7	30.9
Caring				
% of people providing unpaid care of 50 hours or more a week	1.6	4.3	1.9	4.9
% of people providing unpaid care of 20-49 hours a week	3.0	5.6	3.7	6.5
Housing				
% of people living in a household without central heating	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.5
	Under 50	50 or over	Under 50	50 or over
Isolation				
% of people living on their own	6.1	23.0	6.0	23.6
Caring				
% of people providing unpaid care	4.8	12.4	5.4	13.1
	Ages 16-49	50 or over	Ages 16-49	50 or over
Qualifications				
% of people with no qualifications	8.2	21.7	10.3	27.0

What does this tell us?

- Gloucestershire has a lower proportion of 0-19 year olds and 20-64 year olds when compared to the national figure. In contrast the proportion of people aged 65+ exceeds the national figure.
- As is the case in many parts of the UK, the number of older people in the county has steadily increased over the last 10 years.
- Projections suggest trends in the ageing of the population will continue, with the number of people aged 65+ projected to increase by around 62,100 or 43.4% between 2022 and 2047.

¹⁴ Census 2021, www.nomisweb.co.uk

- There are differences in outcomes between older and younger people in a number of areas including health, caring, risk of isolation and housing.
- Gloucestershire's ageing population will have financial and resource implications, as this is the age at which GCC adult care and other service support are most likely to be required. It will also have some benefits, as a result of the positive contribution many older people make to society - through providing unpaid care, involvement in civic organisations and other forms of volunteering.¹⁵ Nationally, people aged between 65 and 74 provide the highest level of formal volunteering across all age groups, with those aged 75 and over providing the second highest level.¹⁶

Disability

Under the Equality Act (2010) a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This is consistent with the Census definition of a limiting long-term health problem.

In 2023 to 2024, the Family Resources Survey (covering the UK) reported one in four people as being disabled. Amongst disabled children the most common impairment type was 'social/behavioural' impairment (59%), disabled working age adults reported both 'mental health' (48%), and 'mobility' (42%), and 'mobility' was also the most common issue for disabled adults of state pension age (69%).¹⁷

Current population

According to the 2021 Census 16.8% of Gloucestershire residents reported a disability under the Equality Act. 6.4% reported that their activities were limited 'a lot' and 10.4% reported their activities were limited 'a little'. The equivalent national figures for England were 17.3%, 7.3% and 10.0%. At a household level, 30.3% of households had at least one person with a long-term limiting health problem or disability; this was slightly lower than the figure for England of 32.0%.

Table 5 shows that the Forest of Dean and Gloucester had the highest proportion of residents reporting a disability under the Equality Act at 19.2% and 17.4% of the population respectively; both districts exceeded the county and national figures. Cotswold had the lowest proportion of residents reporting a disability at 15.4%. At ward level, Podsmead in Gloucester had the highest proportion (22.5%), followed by Cinderford West in the Forest of Dean (22.2%); The Rissingtons in Cotswold had the lowest proportion (11.5%) followed by Battledown in Cheltenham (11.6%).

¹⁵ Local Government Association [Ageing: the silver lining \(local.gov.uk\)](https://www.local.gov.uk)

¹⁶ [Community Life Survey 2024/25: Volunteering and charitable giving - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

¹⁷ [Family Resources Survey 2023/24 Family Resources Survey: financial year 2023 to 2024 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk);
[UK disability statistics: Prevalence and life experiences - House of Commons Library](https://www.parliament.uk)

Table 5: Percentage of people disabled under the Equality Act, by broad age group, Gloucestershire, 2021¹⁸

	% of population				
	All ages	0-15	16-49	50-64	65+
Cheltenham	15.9	4.8	12.9	17.2	31.7
Cotswold	15.4	4.6	11.3	14.7	28.1
Forest of Dean	19.2	5.2	14.6	20.7	33.3
Gloucester	17.4	5.6	13.9	21.3	35.9
Stroud	16.9	5.2	13.3	17.1	31.3
Tewkesbury	16.0	5.5	12.1	17.0	30.2
Gloucestershire	16.8	5.2	13.1	18.0	31.7
England	17.3	6.3	12.7	21.1	35.2

Dementia is one of the causes of disability in older people. Estimated projections suggest that in 2026 there will be approximately 11,335 people aged 65+ living with dementia in Gloucestershire. The proportion of people with dementia increases with age - people aged 65-69 account for 6.0% of dementia sufferers over 65 in Gloucestershire; this increases to 23.5% for the 80-84 age group. Given the ageing population, the number of dementia sufferers is likely to increase in the future.

Table 6: Predicted number of people aged 65 and over with dementia, Gloucestershire, 2026¹⁹

	Number of people with dementia by age group						
	Total	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85-89	90+
Cheltenham	1,984	106	162	324	433	454	507
Cotswold	1,982	111	183	353	465	434	436
Forest of Dean	1,685	104	165	323	409	343	342
Gloucester	1,770	117	165	312	421	378	377
Stroud	2,240	139	216	420	509	484	472
Tewkesbury	1,724	104	162	317	421	378	342
Gloucestershire	11,335	682	1055	2,044	2,667	2,472	2,416
England	812,196	51,815	78,575	148,294	187,292	173,931	172,288

Note: Figures may not equal the sum of the districts due to rounding

¹⁸ Census 2021, www.nomisweb.co.uk

¹⁹ Poppi, <http://www.poppi.org.uk/> Accessed 27/02/2026

Estimated projections suggest that in 2026 there will be approximately 12,769 people aged 18+ living with a learning disability in Gloucestershire (see Table 7) equating to 2.3% of the adult population.²⁰ Of this group, about 2,604 are estimated to have moderate or severe learning disabilities, equating to 0.5% of the adult population.²¹

Table 7: Predicted number of people with learning disabilities aged 18+, Gloucestershire, 2026²²

Predicted number of people aged 18+ with a learning disability, by age group									
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+
Cheltenham	2,340	310	408	407	348	347	255	188	77
Cotswold	1,821	159	212	276	280	340	277	206	71
Forest of Dean	1,716	162	232	261	242	322	255	184	58
Gloucester	2,564	329	471	481	383	391	269	177	64
Stroud	2,406	197	331	404	388	436	333	236	81
Tewkesbury	1,923	159	311	348	289	322	249	184	62
Gloucestershire	12,769	1,317	1,965	2,174	1,927	2,161	1,638	1,174	413
England	1,114,559	138,391	199,252	199,785	169,147	171,372	123,351	84,077	29,185

Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding

With regards to children, in 2024/25, 5,406 school pupils in Gloucestershire (5.8% of school pupils) were known to have a learning disability. Of these children, 4,824 had a moderate learning disability and 477 had a severe learning disability.²³

²⁰ PANSI, <http://www.pansi.org.uk/index.php?pageNo=388&areaID=8260&loc=8260> Accessed 27/02/2026

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² PANSI, <http://www.pansi.org.uk/index.php?pageNo=388&areaID=8260&loc=8260> Accessed 27/02/2026

²³ Special educational needs in England, GOV.UK [Special educational needs in England: January 2025 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england) Accessed 20/01/2026

In 2024/25 Gloucestershire GPs recorded that 0.7% of their registered patients were known to have a learning disability;²⁴ this was higher than the England figure of 0.6%. In 2025, 1.8% of people aged 16+ who completed the GP patient survey in Gloucestershire, reported that they had a learning disability;²⁵ this was lower than the England figure of 1.9%. The discrepancy between the percentage of people reporting a learning disability and the percentage recorded by GPs may be due to under-reporting amongst GPs of people who have mild learning disabilities.

Evidence shows that people with learning disabilities have poorer health than the general population in England, much of which is avoidable, and that the impact of these health inequalities is serious; in 2023, 38.8% of deaths were rated as ‘avoidable’ for people with a learning disability - this compares to 21.6% for the general population (2022 data).²⁶ Research from the 2023 Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR) found that, on average, adults with a learning disability die 19.5 years younger than adults in the general population.²⁷ In addition, the 2023 LeDeR Review found that the proportion of people with learning disabilities dying in hospital (57.3%) was higher than in the general population (43.6%).²⁸ These inequalities result to an extent from the barriers which people with learning disabilities face in accessing healthcare.

Vision and hearing impairments affect people from all sections of society and across all age groups. In 2025 an estimated 1.6% of the 16+ population in Gloucestershire reported blindness or partial sight. During the same period an estimated 6.3% of the population aged 16+ reported deafness or hearing loss.²⁹ Both of these figures are slightly higher than the national average. People can become more likely to suffer from hearing and vision impairments as they get older; given the ageing population this means the number of people affected by these conditions is likely to increase in the future.

Table 8: Visual and hearing impairments³⁰

	Gloucestershire			England		
	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025
% reporting blindness or partial sight	1.3	1.2	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4
% reporting deafness or hearing loss	6.7	6.2	6.3	6.0	5.8	6.1

²⁴ National General Practice Profiles, OHID [Learning Disability Profiles - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care \(phe.org.uk\)](#) Accessed 19/12/2025

²⁵ [GP Patient Survey](#) Accessed 16/01/2026

²⁶ LeDer Report 2023 [leder-annual-report-2023.pdf](#) Accessed 25/02/2025

²⁷ *Ibid.* The median age at death of adults with a learning disability whose death were notified to LeDer between 2018-2023 was 62.5 (Note: Age at death is not the same as life expectancy).

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ [GP Patient Survey](#) Accessed 16/01/2026

³⁰ *Ibid.*

Outcomes by disability

The 2021 Census found that people in Gloucestershire reporting a disability under the Equality Act were more likely than people who were not disabled under the Equality Act to be providing unpaid care, to be living in a household without access to a car or van and to be living in social housing. Amongst people aged 25 or over, people with long-term limiting illnesses or disability were more likely than others to have never worked and to be in routine occupations and were less likely to be in managerial positions. This is also reflected nationally.

Table 9: Outcomes by disability in Gloucestershire, 2021³¹

	Gloucestershire		England	
	Disabled under Equality Act	Not disabled under Equality Act	Disabled under Equality Act	Not disabled under Equality Act
Caring				
% of people providing unpaid care	12.7	7.1	13.2	7.2
% of people providing unpaid care of 50 hours a week or more	4.5	1.7	5.1	1.9
Isolation				
% of people living in a household with no access to a car or van	21.8	8.0	29.2	15.4
Employment				
% of people aged 25 or over who have never worked or are long-term unemployed	12.7	4.2	17.1	6.5
% of people aged 25 or over in routine occupations	13.4	10.2	15.3	11.7
% of people aged 25 or over in higher managerial, administrative or professional occupations	10.2	17.5	8.3	16.4
Housing				
% of people living in social housing	23.1	11.3	28.2	14.3

³¹ Census 2021 www.nomisweb.co.uk

What does this tell us?

- According to the 2021 Census, 16.8% of Gloucestershire residents reported having a disability under the Equality Act, this was below the national figure.
- As age increases the proportion of respondents reporting a limiting long term health problem increases.
- Given the ageing population the number of people with a limiting long term health problem is likely to increase in the future.
- There are differences in outcomes between people who are disabled under the Equality Act and people who are not in a number of areas including employment, housing, access to a car or van, and caring.

Sex³²

The sex of an individual, combined with additional factors such as living alone, may affect their health and social care needs. Individuals may also experience discrimination and inequalities because of their sex.

A report by the European Social Survey found 24% of respondents had experienced prejudice based on their sex. Discrimination on the grounds of sex was reported by more respondents than discrimination based on ethnicity.³³

A recent report in 2023 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) states that gender bias is still persistent. The report states that nearly 9 out of 10 men and women worldwide show at least one clear bias against gender equality in areas such as politics, economic, education, intimate partner violence and women's reproductive rights.³⁴

Current population

The overall population split by sex in Gloucestershire is slightly skewed towards females, with females making up 51.1% of the population, and males accounting for 48.9%. This situation is also reflected at district, regional and national level.

³² In April 2025, a Supreme Court judgement (in *For Women Scotland v Scottish Ministers*) confirmed that the terms 'man', 'woman' and 'sex' in the Equality Act refer to biological sex. It is important that people are protected from discrimination under the protected characteristic of Sex and, equally, the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the Equality Act 2010.

[Supreme Court judgment on the meaning of "sex" in the Equality Act 2010: For Women Scotland - House of Commons Library](#)

³³ European Social Survey, Experiences and Expressions of Ageism: Topline Results UK from Round 4 of the European Social Survey (2012) [ESS4 gb topline experiences and expressions of ageism.pdf](#) ([europeansocialsurvey.org](#)) Accessed 30/01/2026.

³⁴ United Nations Development Programme, 2023 Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) [2023 Gender Social Norms Index \(GSNI\) | Human Development Reports](#) Accessed 30/01/2026

Table 10: Population by sex, Gloucestershire 2024³⁵

	% of population	
	Female	Male
Cheltenham	51.0	49.0
Cotswold	51.9	48.1
Forest of Dean	51.0	49.0
Gloucester	50.4	49.6
Stroud	51.2	48.8
Tewkesbury	51.6	48.4
Gloucestershire	51.1	48.9
England	51.0	49.0

Although there are slightly more males than females in the 0-15 year old age band, as age increases, females outnumber males by an increasing margin. In Gloucestershire in 2024, 52.7% of people aged 65-84 were female, whilst for people aged 85+ the difference was more marked with females accounting for 60.9% of the total population; this difference is observed at district, regional and national level. As a result of this, 67% of single pensioner households are shown to be headed by a woman³⁶. However, the proportion of men in the older population is increasing as the life expectancy of men increases; thus amongst the population aged 85 and over in Gloucestershire, the proportion of men increased from 34.1% in 2014 to 39.1% in 2024.

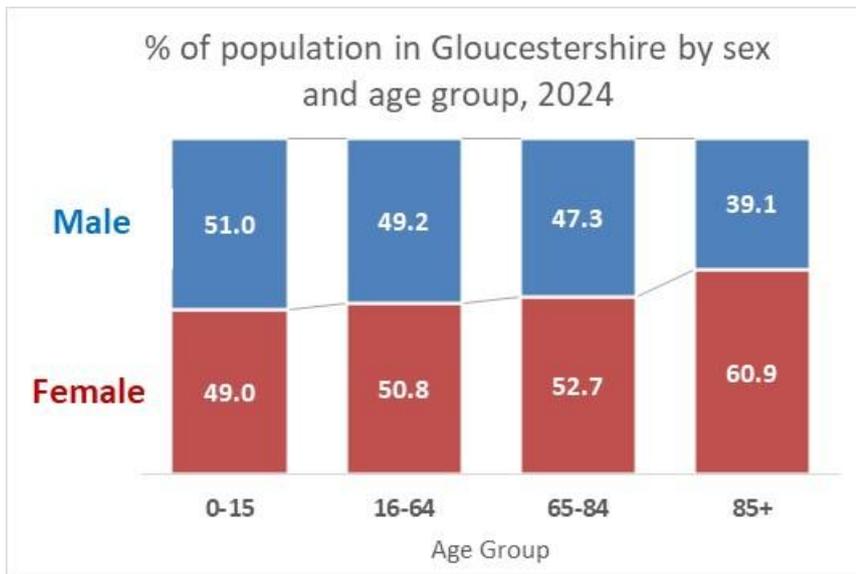


Figure 1: Proportion of Gloucestershire residents by sex and age group, 2024³⁷

³⁵ ONS Mid Year Estimates 2024, www.nomisweb.co.uk

³⁶ Census 2021, www.nomisweb.co.uk. Persons aged 65 years and over living in one-person households.

³⁷ ONS Mid Year Estimates 2024, www.nomisweb.co.uk

Table 11: Population by sex and broad age group, Gloucestershire 2024³⁸

	0-15 years		16-64 years		65-84 years		85+ years	
	Female (%)	Male (%)						
Cheltenham	49.7	50.3	50.2	49.8	53.6	46.4	62.3	37.7
Cotswold	49.1	50.9	51.8	48.2	52.6	47.4	60.1	39.9
Forest of Dean	49.1	50.9	50.8	49.2	51.7	48.3	59.5	40.5
Gloucester	49.1	50.9	49.8	50.2	52.7	47.3	61.8	38.2
Stroud	48.7	51.3	51.0	49.0	52.6	47.4	61.1	38.9
Tewkesbury	48.4	51.6	51.8	48.2	53.1	46.9	60.1	39.9
Gloucestershire	49.0	51.0	50.8	49.2	52.7	47.3	60.9	39.1
England	48.8	51.2	50.7	49.3	52.9	47.1	61.6	38.4

Outcomes by sex

Analysis of the 2021 Census shows that in Gloucestershire, and also reflected nationally:

- Women were more likely than men to head lone parent households with dependent children. In Gloucestershire, 84.2% of such households were headed by a woman, a figure which was in line with the national figure.
- Women aged 65 and over were more likely than men to be living in a household without access to a car, and to be living in a single person household.
- Amongst people aged 50-64, women were more likely than men to be providing unpaid care. Amongst people aged 65 and over, there was no clear difference in the proportion of women and men providing unpaid care.
- Amongst people aged 16-24, males were more likely than females to have no qualifications. Amongst people aged 25-34, females were more likely than males to have a level 4 qualification (a degree or higher).
- Amongst people aged 25-64, men were more likely than women to be in higher managerial, administrative or professional qualifications.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

Analysis of health data for Gloucestershire shows that:

- men have a shorter life expectancy than women.
- men had a similar healthy life expectancy to women in 2022-2024.
- the difference in life expectancy between men and women is greater in the most deprived decile of Gloucestershire compared with the least deprived decile.
- men have higher mortality rates than women from causes considered preventable.
- men have higher suicide rates than women.

Table 12: Outcomes by sex in Gloucestershire

	Gloucestershire		England	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Health³⁹				
Life expectancy at birth 2022-2024 (years) ⁴⁰	83.9	80.3	83.3	79.5
Inequality in life expectancy at birth 2021-2023 (years)	6.6	8.2	8.3	10.5
Healthy life expectancy at birth, 2022-2024 (years) ⁴¹	63.4	63.4	61.3	60.9
Under 75 mortality rate from causes considered preventable 2022-2024 (per 100,00 population) ⁴²	85.1	171.5	104.9	200.2
Suicide rate, 2022-24 (per 100,000 population)	5.6	14.3	5.5	16.8
Caring⁴³				
% of people aged 50-64 providing unpaid care	18.0	11.6	18.7	12.3
% of people aged 65 and over providing unpaid care	10.0	9.9	10.4	10.6
Isolation⁴⁴				
% of people aged 65 and over living in a single person household	37.3	21.2	37.6	23.0
% of people living in a household with no access to a car or van	11.6	8.9	19.3	16.2
% of people aged 65 and over living in a household with no access to a car or van	22.1	10.8	28.3	16.2
% of lone parent households (single family)	84.2	15.8	86.3	13.7
Education⁴⁵				
% of people aged 16-24 with no qualifications	9.9	11.5	9.9	12.2
% of people aged 25-34 with level 4 qualifications	48.9	39.3	51.8	43.3
Employment⁴⁶				
% of people aged 25-64 in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations	13.2	21.7	12.9	19.5

³⁹ Public Health Outcomes Framework, Public Health England [Public Health Outcomes Framework - OHID \(phe.org.uk\)](https://publichealthoutcomesframework.org.uk/) Accessed 02/03/2026

Life expectancy at birth: The average number of years a person would expect to live based on contemporary mortality rates.

What does this tell us?

- The overall population split by sex in Gloucestershire is slightly skewed towards females, with females making up 51.1% of the population and males accounting for 48.9%.
- As age increases differences become more noticeable, with females outnumbering males by an increasing margin.
- These differences have resulted in the majority of single pensioner households being headed by a woman.
- Females are also more likely to head lone parent households with dependent children.
- There are differences by sex in the provision of unpaid care and access to a car/van.
- There are differences by sex in life expectancy, mortality from preventable causes, and suicide.

Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. This means an individual does not need to have undergone any treatment or surgery to be protected by law.

In September 2020, a significant Employment Tribunal ruling took place, where the rights of non-binary and gender fluid people were recognised and protected under the Equality Act 2010.⁴⁷ Until then, it had not been clear whether non-binary people were protected by anti-discrimination legislation. Stonewall states that the Employment Tribunal ruling was a milestone in recognising the rights of non-binary and gender fluid people to be protected from discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. Therefore, the Employment Tribunal judgement will be key in supporting future judicial decisions. The Tribunal held up the important principle that 'gender is a spectrum', broadening the scope of who could be covered by the Equality Act to

Healthy life expectancy at birth: 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.

Mortality rate from causes considered preventable: Preventable mortality refers to causes of death that can be mainly avoided through effective public health and primary prevention interventions (that is, before the onset of diseases or injuries, to reduce incidence).

⁴⁰ [Life expectancy for local areas of the UK - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁴¹ [Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#) The slope index of inequality (SII) is a measure of the social gradient in life expectancy, that is how much life expectancy varies with deprivation. It takes account of health inequalities across the whole range of deprivation within each area and summarises this in a single number.

⁴² OHID, based on Office for National Statistics data, [Mortality Profile | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#) Accessed 02/03/2026

⁴³ Census 2021

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5fc8d559d3bf7f75c134ad3/Ms_R_Taylor_v_Jaguar_Land_Rover_Limited_-_1304471.2018_-_Reasons.pdf

those whose gender identities are 'complex', non-binary, or not the same as they were assigned at birth.⁴⁸

In April 2025, there was a Supreme Court judgement (in *For Women Scotland v Scottish Ministers*) which confirmed that the terms 'man', 'woman' and 'sex' in the Equality Act refer to biological sex, even if the person has a gender recognition certificate.⁴⁹ According to Stonewall, this has left many trans people feeling deeply worried and uncertain, and many organisations and service providers are unsure about what this means for them.⁵⁰ The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has submitted a draft code of practice for Services, Public Functions and Associations to the Minister for Women and Equalities for approval, and this is still in the process of being considered by the Government before it can be put into law. If this is approved, a draft Employment Code will then also be submitted in a similar way.⁵¹ It is, however, important that trans people continue to be protected from discrimination and harassment under the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment in the Equality Act 2010.

Evidence shows that when transgender people reveal their gender variance, they are exposed to a risk of discrimination, bullying and hate crime.⁵² Transgender people are more likely to report mental health conditions and to attempt suicide than the general population;⁵³ one study found that about half of young trans people and a third of trans adults attempt suicide.⁵⁴ Research has also found that transgender people encounter significant difficulties in accessing and using health and social care services due to staffs' lack of knowledge and understanding and sometimes prejudice. Stonewall's LGBT in Britain Trans Report found that two in five trans people (41 per cent) said healthcare staff lacked understanding of trans health needs in general healthcare settings.⁵⁵

Stonewall's LGBT in Britain Trans Report also states that hate crime and discrimination against trans people is widespread throughout all aspects of life. Nationally, two in five trans people had experienced a hate crime or incident in the past 12 months. In addition, the report states that trans people often lack support from their families; more than a quarter have been subjected to domestic violence, and one in four have experienced homelessness at some point.⁵⁶

⁴⁸ Stonewall <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/about-us/news/statement-employment-tribunal-ruling-against-jaguar-land-rover>

⁴⁹ [Supreme Court judgment on the meaning of "sex" in the Equality Act 2010: For Women Scotland - House of Commons Library](#)

⁵⁰ Stonewall [The EHRC's Statutory Guidance and the UK Supreme Court... | Stonewall UK](#)
Stonewall [The Equality and Human Rights Commission announces... | Stonewall UK](#)

⁵¹ Equality and Human Rights Commission [Code of practice for services, public functions and associations: consultation 2025 | EHRC](#)

Bates Wells Law Firm [EHRC Services Code: updated draft still awaiting Government approval | Bates Wells](#)

⁵² Stonewall, LGBT in Britain Trans Report [LGBT in Britain - Trans Report \(2018\) | Stonewall](#) Accessed 02/03/2026

⁵³ House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee, 2016, Transgender Equality .
www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmwomeq/390/390.pdf Accessed 02/03/2026

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Stonewall, LGBT in Britain Trans Report [LGBT in Britain - Trans Report \(2018\) | Stonewall UK](#) Accessed 02/03/2026

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Current population

The Census 2021 has provided the first set of official data on gender identity in England and Wales. In the 2021 Census there was a new question around gender identity, asking 'is your gender the same as the sex you were registered at birth?'. The question referred to a person's sense of their own gender. It was directed only at people aged 16 and over, and answers were voluntary.

However, as of November 2024, the Census 2021 data on gender identity no longer hold the accredited official statistics designation and have been reclassified as official statistics in development.⁵⁷ ONS states:

There are some patterns in the data that are consistent with, but do not conclusively demonstrate, some respondents not interpreting the question as intended; given other sources of uncertainty, not least the impact of question non-response, we cannot say with certainty whether the census estimates are more likely to be an overestimate or an underestimate of the total number of trans people aged over 16 years in England and Wales.⁵⁸

Census estimates on gender identity are, however, broadly consistent with the best available comparator of the GP Patient Survey and international comparators.

Overall, 94.8% of residents in Gloucestershire aged 16 and over answered the question. Of these, almost 2,200 people (0.4%) regarded their gender identity to be different from the sex registered at birth. This is slightly lower than the national average of 0.5%.

A total of approximately 28,000 people in Gloucestershire (5.2%) chose not to answer this voluntary question. Due to the sensitive nature of the question, it could be possible that some transgender people felt reticent to provide an answer. The LGBT Foundation states that figures provided in the Census represent only a small proportion of all LGBTQ+ people, and that they hope that an increasing number of our communities feel confident to self-disclose in future Censuses. They also state that "unfortunately, there are a range of reasons why people won't feel able to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity. The historic and ongoing attitudes towards LGBTQ+ communities, particularly trans and non-binary people, will stop many from feeling safe to provide this information. Meanwhile, many LGBTQ+ people are living within households and environments where they are unable to be open about their gender identity, sexual orientation and trans identity. As such it will be years before we get an accurate picture, informed by figures from, and comparison with, future surveys."⁵⁹

The approximate figure of 2,200 transgender people in the county should therefore be regarded as the minimum number, but this could potentially be considerably higher.

⁵⁷ Office for Statistics Regulation, [Review of statistics on gender identity based on data collected as part of the 2021 England and Wales Census: Final report – Office for Statistics Regulation](#)

⁵⁸ ONS, [Quality of Census 2021 gender identity data - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁵⁹ LGBT Foundation [LGBT Foundation cautiously welcomes the first snapshot of LGBTQ+ identities in the Census - LGBT Foundation](#)

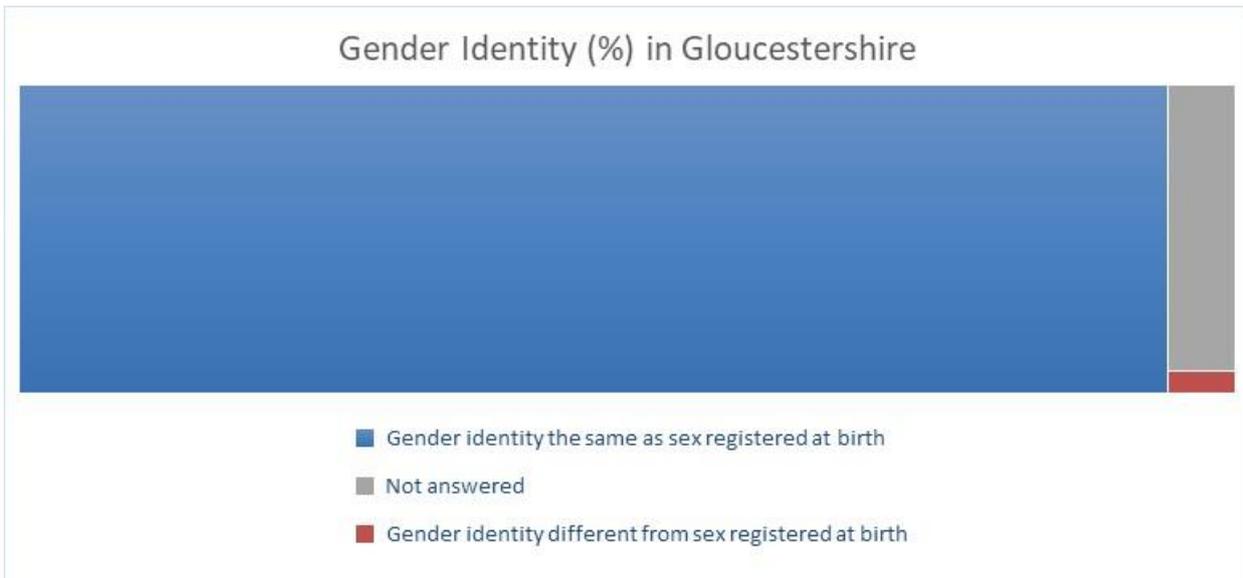


Figure 2: Proportion of Gloucestershire residents aged 16 and over by broad gender identity, 2021⁶⁰

The 2021 Census found that within Gloucestershire the most common gender identity other than 'gender identity different from sex registered at birth' was 'no specific identity given'. Around 780 people (0.1%) fall within this category. The next most common identity was 'trans woman' (423 people, 0.1%), followed by 'trans man' (380 people, 0.1%), non-binary (355 people, 0.1%), and 'all other gender identities' (229 people, 0.0%).

⁶⁰ Census 2021

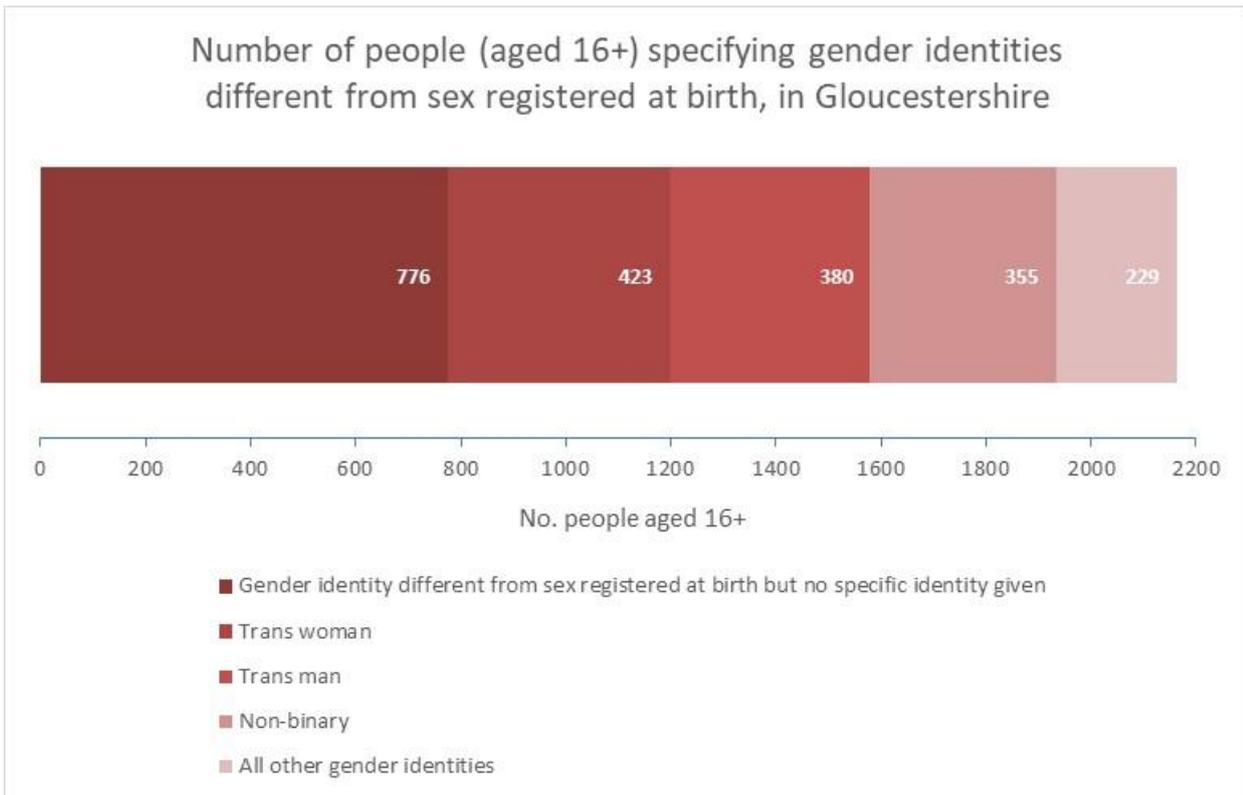


Figure 3: Number of Gloucestershire residents aged 16 and over by gender identity, where different from sex registered at birth, 2021⁶¹

At district level:

- Gloucester has the highest number of people stating their gender identity is different from their sex registered at birth (600 people).
- Gloucester has the highest numbers of trans women and trans men in the county (114 and 107 people respectively).
- Cheltenham has the highest number of people identifying themselves within 'non-binary' and 'all other gender identities' (123 and 80 people respectively).
- Gloucester has the highest number of people with a 'gender identity different from sex registered at birth, but with no specific identity given'. Over 280 people (0.3%) identified with this gender identity. This exceeded both the county and national average of 0.1% and 0.2% respectively.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

Table 13: Population aged 16 and over by gender identity, 2021⁶²

	Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth		Gender identity different from sex registered at birth but no specific identity given		Trans woman		Trans man		Non-binary		All other gender identities		Not answered	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cheltenham	92,792	94.3	134	0.1	92	0.1	91	0.1	123	0.1	80	0.1	5,126	5.2
Cotswold	72,549	95.1	57	0.1	51	0.1	51	0.1	33	0.0	21	0.0	3,552	4.7
Forest of Dean	68,764	94.1	119	0.2	38	0.1	30	0.0	30	0.0	20	0.0	4,046	5.5
Gloucester	100,259	93.8	282	0.3	114	0.1	107	0.1	51	0.0	46	0.0	6,080	5.7
Stroud	94,647	94.5	115	0.1	71	0.1	60	0.1	89	0.1	41	0.0	5,176	5.2
Tewkesbury	73,431	94.9	69	0.1	60	0.1	42	0.1	29	0.0	21	0.0	3,702	4.8
Gloucestershire	502,440	94.4	776	0.1	423	0.1	380	0.1	355	0.1	229	0.0	27,682	5.2
England	43,002,331	93.5	113,760	0.2	45,684	0.1	46,513	0.1	28,710	0.1	17,177	0.0	2,752,783	6.0

Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding

⁶² Census 2021

What does this tell us?

- The proportion of transgender people aged 16+ in Gloucestershire is slightly lower than the national average.
- Gloucester has a higher number of transgender people than the other districts in the county, most of whom identifying themselves as trans men or trans women.
- There are at least 2,200 transgender people in the county, but this could potentially be considerably higher.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals who are in a civil partnership, or marriage, against discrimination.

Evidence suggests being married or in a civil partnership is associated with better mental health. According to the ONS Personal Wellbeing in the UK Survey, people who are married or in a civil partnership are most likely to report higher life satisfaction than those of any other marital status.⁶³

Current population

Among residents of Gloucestershire aged 16 and over:

- 33.6% are single and have never married or registered a civil partnership
- 47.8% are married
- 0.2% are in a registered civil partnership
- 2.0% are separated but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership
- 9.9% are divorced or formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved
- 6.5% are widowed or a surviving partner from a civil partnership⁶⁴

⁶³ ONS Personal Wellbeing in the UK 2022/23 [Personal well-being in the UK - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁶⁴ Census 2021 www.nomisweb.co.uk

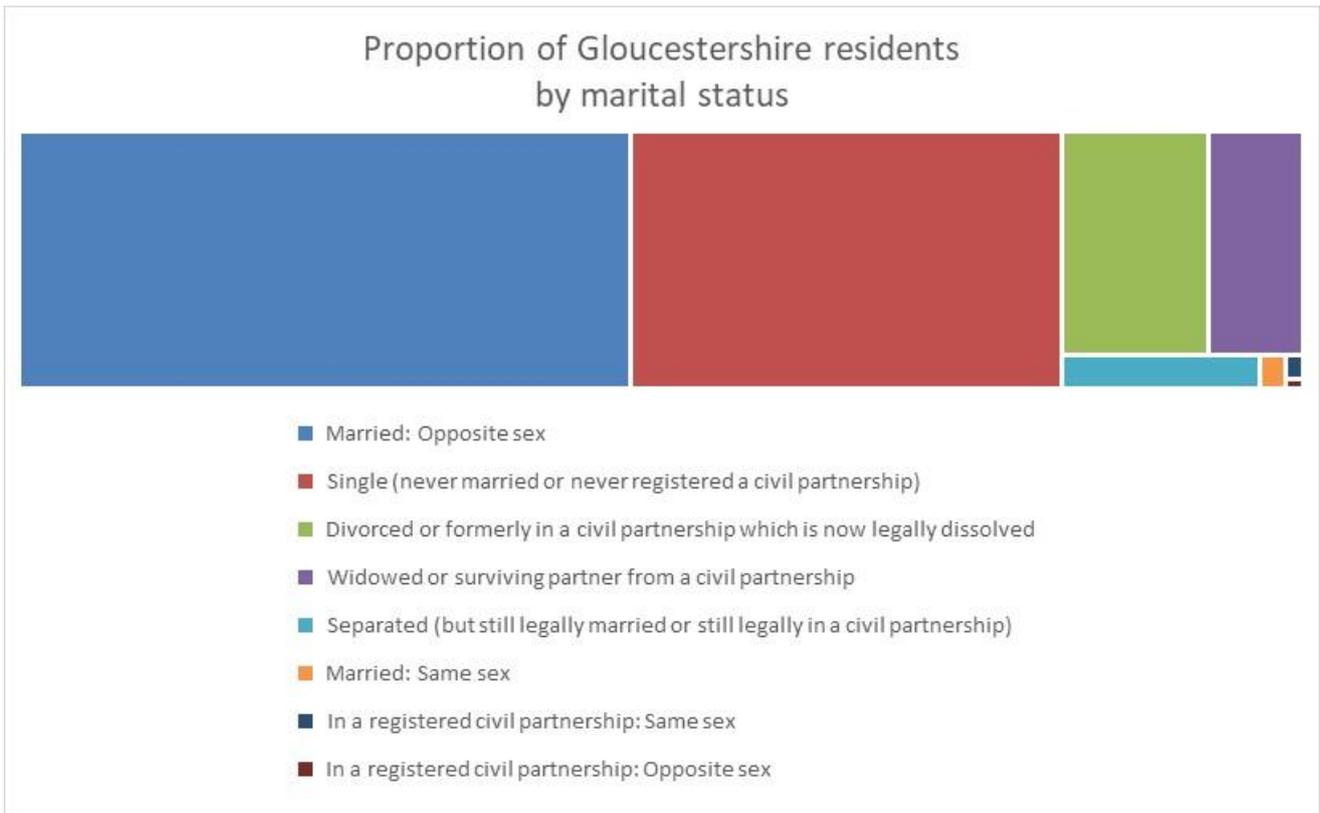


Figure 4: Proportion of eligible Gloucestershire residents by marital status, 2021⁶⁵

Gloucestershire has a lower proportion of people who are single, in a same sex marriage, or are separated when compared to the national figure. In contrast the proportion of people who are married to a person of the opposite sex, are divorced, or are widowed exceeds the national figures.

At district level:

- Cheltenham has the highest proportion of single people (39.5%) and exceeds the county and national figures. In contrast 27.9% of people in Cotswold are single, which is below the county and national level.
- Cotswold has the highest proportion of residents who are married at 53.0%, which is higher than the county and national figures. The lowest proportion was recorded in Cheltenham. The proportion of same-sex marriages and civil partnerships is similar across all districts.
- Stroud has the highest proportion of people who are separated and divorced.
- Cotswold and Forest of Dean have the highest proportion of people who are widowed or a surviving partner of a civil partnership while Gloucester has the lowest. This reflects the age structure of these districts.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Table 14: Marital status of eligible Gloucestershire residents, 2021⁶⁶

	% of eligible population									
	Single (never married or never registered a civil partnership)	Married: Opposite sex	Married: Same sex	Married: Total	In a registered civil partnership: Opposite sex	In a registered civil partnership: Same sex	In a registered civil partnership: Total	Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership)	Divorced or formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	Widowed or surviving partner from a civil partnership
Cheltenham	39.5	42.4	0.2	42.6	0.1	0.1	0.2	1.9	9.6	6.2
Cotswold	27.9	52.7	0.3	53.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	2.0	9.8	7.1
Forest of Dean	31.4	49.2	0.3	49.4	0.1	0.1	0.2	2.0	9.9	7.1
Gloucester	38.9	43.0	0.2	43.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	2.2	9.9	5.5
Stroud	30.9	49.8	0.3	50.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	2.1	10.1	6.7
Tewkesbury	30.2	50.9	0.2	51.2	0.0	0.1	0.2	1.9	10.0	6.7
Gloucestershire	33.6	47.6	0.2	47.8	0.1	0.1	0.2	2.0	9.9	6.5
England	37.9	44.2	0.3	44.5	0.1	0.1	0.2	2.2	9.1	6.1

There is considerable variation in marital status between age groups. As you would expect, people aged 16-24 are the most likely to be single, while those aged 65+ are the most likely age group to be widowed or a surviving partner from a same sex civil partnership. The proportion of people that are married or divorced increases with age, until 65+ when it begins to fall, to take into account the increasing proportion of people who have lost a partner. These trends are not unique to Gloucestershire, but are reflected at a regional, national and district level.

⁶⁶ Census 2021, www.nomisweb.co.uk

Table 15: Marital status by age, Gloucestershire⁶⁷

	% of age group				
	16-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership)	98.9	70.5	30.4	15.2	5.4
Married or in a registered civil partnership	1.0	26.2	56.4	62.1	59.7
Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership)	0.0	1.4	3.4	2.9	1.1
Divorced or civil partnership dissolved	0.0	1.8	9.2	17.2	12.0
Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner	0.0	0.1	0.5	2.6	21.7

What does this tell us?

- Around 48% of Gloucestershire’s residents aged 16+ are married, this is higher than the national figure.
- The proportions of the population who are divorced, or widowed also exceed the national figures while the proportions of people who are single, or separated are below the national figures.
- There is considerable variation in marital status between the age groups, with those aged 16-24 most likely to be single, and people who are widowed or a surviving civil partnership partner are most likely to be in the 65+ age group. This may have an impact on the family support people have available to them and the level of support they require from elsewhere.

Pregnancy and Maternity

The Equality Act protects women who are pregnant, have a pregnancy-related illness, have given birth in the last 26 weeks (non-work context) or are on maternity leave (work context) against discrimination in relation to their pregnancy.

Current picture

There were 5,826 live births in Gloucestershire in 2024. This represented a 0.2% decrease on the previous year (decrease of 13 live births). This differed from the national trend, where there was an overall increase of 0.7% from 2023.

The highest proportion of deliveries was to women aged 30 to 34, continuing the trend of later motherhood. Births to mothers above the age of 30 account for a slightly higher proportion of total births in Gloucestershire than they do nationally, whilst those to mothers aged under 30 account for a lower proportion.

⁶⁷ Census 2021, www.nomisweb.co.uk

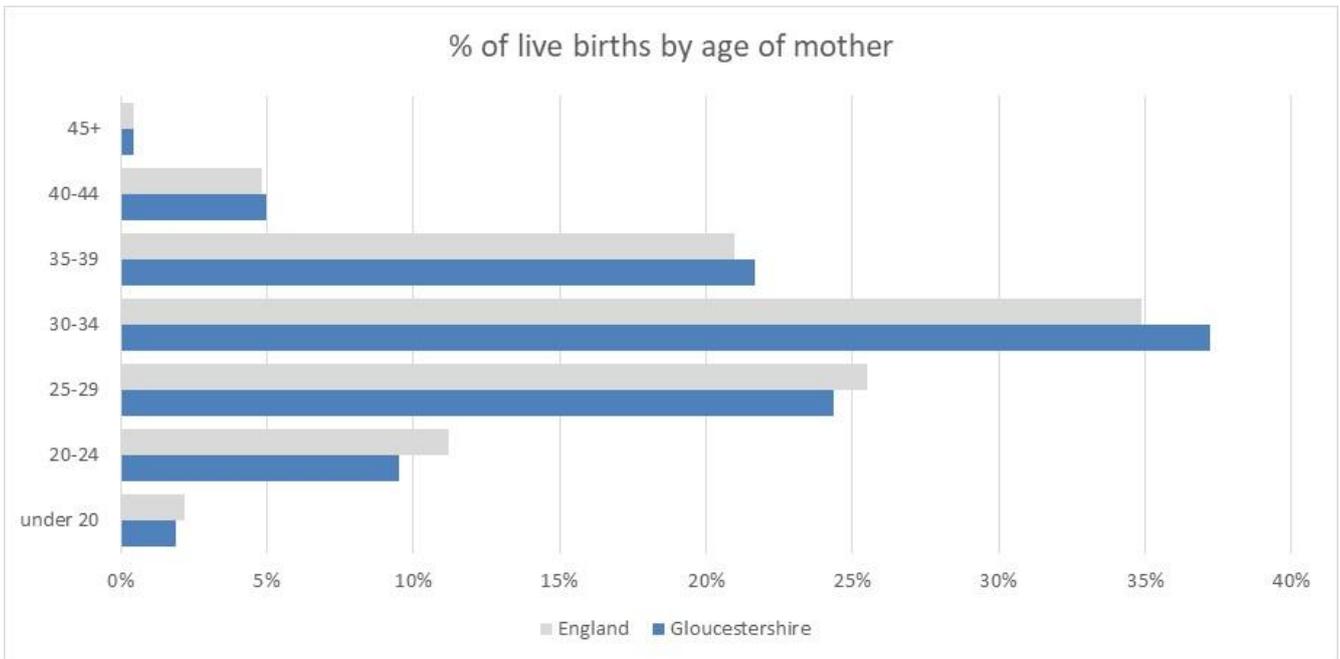


Figure 5: Percentage of live births in Gloucestershire compared with England by age of mother, 2024⁶⁸

At district level:

- Gloucester has the highest number of live births in Gloucestershire, accounting for nearly a quarter of the county’s live births (24.4%).
- Gloucester and Tewkesbury have a higher proportion of births to mothers aged under 20 (2.6% and 2.2% respectively) than Gloucestershire (1.9%) and England (2.2%).
- Cheltenham, Cotswold and Stroud all have a higher proportion of births to mothers aged 35+ than Gloucestershire and England.
- Live births in all districts, except Cheltenham and Forest of Dean, have decreased from the previous year, reflecting the overall county and national picture (see Table 16 below).
- Stroud has seen the largest reduction in live births from the previous year, with a decrease of 7.5%. Forest of Dean saw the largest increase in live births since 2023, with an increase of 11.6%.

⁶⁸ ONS, www.nomisweb.co.uk

Table 16: Live births by age of mother, Gloucestershire, 2024⁶⁹

	Total number of live births	% of total births by age of mother						
		under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45+
Cheltenham	1,040	16	90	205	392	265	61	11
Cotswold	637	7	47	132	263	152	36	-
Forest of Dean	791	15	94	206	268	148	57	3
Gloucester	1,421	37	177	420	491	244	48	4
Stroud	939	12	70	207	350	245	50	5
Tewkesbury	998	22	77	248	403	208	38	2
Gloucestershire	5,826	109	555	1,418	2,167	1,262	290	25
England	567,708	12,508	63,470	144,764	197,846	119,147	27,355	2,560

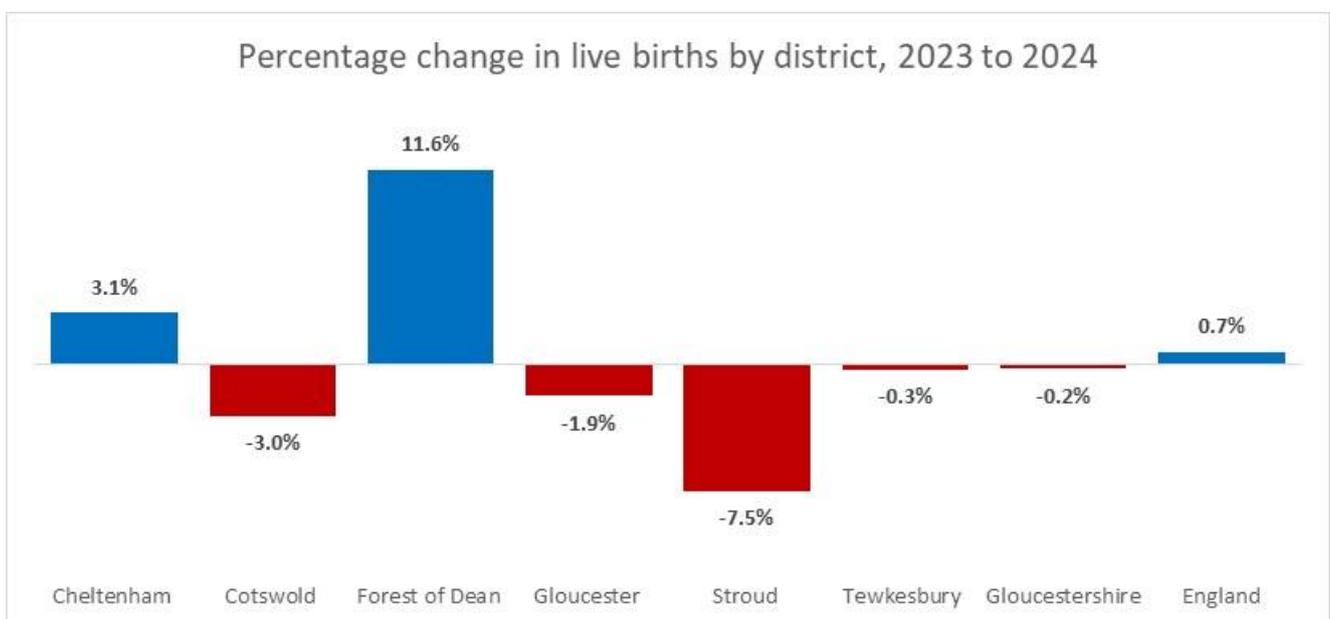


Figure 6: Percentage change in live births by district, 2023 to 2024

What does this tell us?

- Live births in all districts, except Cheltenham and Forest of Dean, have decreased from the previous year, reflecting the overall county picture.
- The largest proportion of deliveries in Gloucestershire was among the 30-34 year old age group, continuing the trend of later motherhood.

⁶⁹ ONS, Live births in England and Wales down to local authority local area

Births in England and Wales: summary tables - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk) Accessed 11/02/2025

Race and Ethnicity⁷⁰

Current population

The Equality Act states that race includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins. The government refers to ethnicity, and not race; this is because surveys usually ask people for their ethnicity and not their race, and using consistent terms helps people to understand the data.⁷¹

The BLM movement (Black Lives Matter) protests in 2020, following the death of George Floyd, have publicly highlighted the ongoing struggles against racial discrimination and institutional racism. Locally, services should reflect on the need to better understand racism and to be proactively anti-racist.⁷²

A report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission found that people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups continue to experience discrimination and inequality in education, employment, housing, pay and living standards, health, and the criminal justice system.⁷³

The 2021 Census found that 10% of Gloucestershire residents (around 64,500 people) were born outside the UK compared with a national figure of 17.4%; of this group, 50.5% were born in another European country and 22.8% were born in the Middle East or Asia.

With regards to ethnicity, the 2021 Census found that:

- 87.7% of Gloucestershire residents were white people from an English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British background
- 2.9% were people from an Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh background
- 2.2% were people with a mixed or multiple ethnic background
- 1.2% were black people from a British, Welsh, Caribbean or African background
- 0.6% were white people from an Irish background
- 0.1% were white Gypsy and Irish Traveller people, 0.1% were white Roma people
- 4.5% were in the 'other white' group
- 0.7% were in another ethnic group.

The 2021 Census found that overall, 6.9% of the population in Gloucestershire were from an ethnic minority background (excluding white minorities). This was considerably lower than the national figure of 19.0%.

When including white minorities, the proportion of people in Gloucestershire from an ethnic minority rose to 12.3%. This was less than half of the national average of 26.5%.

⁷⁰ ONS [Writing about ethnicity - GOV.UK \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ethnicity-facts-figures)

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Further reading: Race Equality Guide, British Council <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/guide-race-equality.pdf>

⁷³ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2016), Healing a divided Britain: the need for a comprehensive race equality strategy [Race Report 1j final.indd \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](#) Accessed 30/01/2026

At district level:

- Gloucester had the highest proportion of people from ethnic minority backgrounds (excluding white minorities), at 15.1% of its population. However, this is still considerably lower than the national figure.
- Cheltenham had a higher proportion than the county-wide figure of people from ethnic minority backgrounds (excluding white minorities), at 8.6%.
- Forest of Dean had the lowest proportion of people from ethnic minority backgrounds (excluding white minorities), at 2.5% of its total population.
- The proportion of people within the 'other white' ethnic group was higher in Cheltenham than Gloucestershire and England as a whole (7.0% compared with 4.5% for Gloucestershire and 6.3% for England).
- 41.5% of white Roma people lived in Gloucester City, and 37.3% of white Gypsy and Irish Traveller people lived in Tewkesbury borough.

At ward level:

- Barton and Tredworth ward in Gloucester was the most ethnically diverse ward with 47.4% of its population from ethnic minority backgrounds (excluding white minorities), and 14.5% from another white background other than the white English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British ethnic group.

Table 17: Population by ethnic group, Gloucestershire 2021 (number of people) ⁷⁴

	Aggregated Ethnic Groups		Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	Black, black British, black Welsh, Caribbean or African	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	White Minorities				Other ethnic group
	Ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities)	White					White: Irish	White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	White: Roma	White: Other white	
Cheltenham	10,277	108,559	4,922	1181	2,949	98,932	1,031	80	158	8,358	1,225
Cotswold	3,320	87,510	1195	402	1393	83,545	635	71	57	3,202	330
Forest of Dean	2,135	84,869	625	242	925	82,401	314	103	63	1,988	343
Gloucester	19,953	112,461	8,543	4,826	5,014	103,317	800	224	296	7,824	1,570
Stroud	4,403	116,701	1256	528	2,171	111,896	711	126	59	3,909	448
Tewkesbury	4,676	90,206	1924	595	1699	85,720	537	360	81	3,508	458
Gloucestershire	44,765	600,314	18,464	7,777	14,149	565,811	4,034	965	714	28,790	4,375

⁷⁴ Census 2021

Table 18: Population by ethnic group, Gloucestershire 2021 (% of population)

	Aggregated Ethnic Groups		Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	Black, black British, black Welsh, Caribbean or African	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	White Minorities				Other ethnic group
	Ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities)	White					White: Irish	White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	White: Roma	White: Other white	
Cheltenham	8.6	91.4	4.1	1.0	2.5	83.3	0.9	0.1	0.1	7.0	1.0
Cotswold	3.7	96.3	1.3	0.4	1.5	92.0	0.7	0.1	0.1	3.5	0.4
Forest of Dean	2.5	97.5	0.7	0.3	1.1	94.7	0.4	0.1	0.1	2.3	0.4
Gloucester	15.1	84.9	6.5	3.6	3.8	78.0	0.6	0.2	0.2	5.9	1.2
Stroud	3.6	96.4	1.0	0.4	1.8	92.4	0.6	0.1	0.0	3.2	0.4
Tewkesbury	4.9	95.1	2.0	0.6	1.8	90.3	0.6	0.4	0.1	3.7	0.5
Gloucestershire	6.9	93.1	2.9	1.2	2.2	87.7	0.6	0.1	0.1	4.5	0.7

Gloucestershire's 0-15 year old population is more diverse than other age groups. According to the 2021 Census around 12.1% of 0-15 year olds were from ethnic minority backgrounds (excluding white minorities) compared to 7.3% of 16-64 year olds and 1.8% of people aged 65+. This trend is reflected at a regional, national and district level.

Table 19: Population by ethnic group and age, Gloucestershire⁷⁵

	% of age group		
	0-15	16-64	65+
Ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities)	12.1	7.3	1.8
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	3.7	3.3	0.9
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	1.5	1.4	0.4
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	5.9	1.8	0.3
Other ethnic group	0.9	0.8	0.2
White	87.9	92.7	98.2
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	83.3	86.2	95.5
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.2	0.2	0.1
White: Irish	0.2	0.6	1.0
White: Roma	0.1	0.1	0.0
White: Other White	4.0	5.6	1.5

Population change (2011-2021)

The population of Gloucestershire has become increasingly diverse. The number of people from an ethnic minority background (excluding white minorities) increased by 63.8% between 2011 and 2021, from 4.6% to 6.9% of the population. The number of people from the 'other white' ethnic group has increased by over 50% during the same period, from 3.1% of the population in 2011 to 4.5% of the population in 2021. This trend is reflected at a regional, national and district level.

⁷⁵ Census 2021

Table 20: Population change 2011-2021, Gloucestershire⁷⁶

	2011	2021	% change 2011- 2021
Ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities)	27,337	44,765	63.8
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	12,433	18,464	48.5
Black, black British, black Welsh, Caribbean or African	5,150	7,777	51.0
Mixed or multiple ethnic group	8,661	14,149	63.4
Other ethnic group	1,093	4,375	300.3
White	569,647	600,314	5.4
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	546,599	565,811	3.5
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	3,759	4,034	7.3
White: Irish	N/A	965	N/A
White: Roma	N/A	714	N/A
Other white	18,558	28,790	55.1

Language

According to the 2021 Census, 27,000 people in Gloucestershire (4.3% of the population) did not speak English as their main language. Amongst this group, Polish was the most common language (6,703 people), followed by Romanian (2,796 people) and then Portuguese (1,144 people). An EU language other than Polish was the main language of 10,683 people. At district level, Gloucester had the highest proportion of people who did not speak English as their main language (8%) followed by Cheltenham (6.9%). Some 84% of people, whose main language was not English, could speak English well or very well. Older people were less likely than younger people to be proficient in English; 32.3% of people aged 50 and over who did not speak English as a main language were not proficient in English compared with 12.0% of people aged under 50 who did not speak English as a main language.

⁷⁶ Census 2011 and Census 2021

Table 21: Main language and proficiency in English, Gloucestershire 2021⁷⁷

	Do not speak English as a main language		Not able to speak English or not able to speak English well	
	Number of people	% of population aged 3 or over	Number of people	% of population aged 3 or over
Cheltenham	7,966	6.9	1,095	0.9
Cotswold	1,972	2.2	175	0.2
Forest of Dean	1,566	1.8	376	0.5
Gloucester	10,259	8.0	1,989	1.5
Stroud	2,162	1.8	264	0.2
Tewkesbury	3,075	3.4	395	0.5
Gloucestershire	27,000	4.3	4,294	0.7

Outcomes by ethnic group⁷⁸

A report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission found that people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups continue to experience discrimination and inequality in education, employment, housing, pay and living standards, health, and the criminal justice system. The 2021 Census showed differences in outcomes in a number of areas in Gloucestershire, many of which are reflected at national level:

- amongst people aged 65 and over, people from Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African backgrounds were more likely than people from other ethnic backgrounds to be disabled under the Equality Act, or be in poor health;
- people living in households who are from Ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities) backgrounds were all more likely than people living in households from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British, and White: Irish backgrounds to have fewer bedrooms than required;
- people from Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African, and Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups were more likely than other ethnic groups to live in social housing;
- people from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British, and White: Irish backgrounds were less likely than other ethnic groups to be living in private rented housing or living rent free;
- people from all groups which were not White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British were more likely to be living in a household without access to a car or van;

⁷⁷ Census 2021, Table TS029 – Proficiency in English

⁷⁸ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2016), Healing a divided Britain: the need for a comprehensive race equality strategy [Healing a divided Britain: the need for a comprehensive race equality strategy | EHRC \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/our-reports-and-publications/healing-a-divided-britain-the-need-for-a-comprehensive-race-equality-strategy) Accessed 26/02/2026

- amongst people aged 25-34, people from White Irish, Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh, Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African, and Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups were more likely to have level 4 qualifications than people from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British backgrounds, whilst people from White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White, or Other ethnic groups were less likely to have this level of qualification;
- amongst people aged 16-24, people from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British backgrounds were less likely to have no qualifications than people from all other ethnic groups.
- amongst people aged 25-49, people from White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British, and also White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White backgrounds were less likely to be unemployed than people from any other ethnic background;
- amongst people aged 25-49, those from White: Irish, and also Asian, Asian British or Asian backgrounds were more likely to be in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations than people from a White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British background, whilst people from Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African, Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, Other ethnic groups, and also White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White backgrounds were less likely to be in such occupations.

Table 22: Outcomes by ethnic group, Gloucestershire 2021⁷⁹

	All	Aggregated Ethnic Groups		Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	Black, black British, black Welsh, Caribbean or African	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	White Minorities		Other ethnic group
		Ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities)	White					White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White	White: Irish	
Health and disability										
% of people aged 65 and over with a long-term limiting illness or disability	31.7	32.8	31.7	30.7	38.3	32.6	31.7	30.4	32.1	30.8
% of people aged 65 and over in poor health	9.8	12.8	9.8	12.3	16.2	9.8	9.7	11.5	11.9	12.4
Housing										
% of people living in a household with fewer bedrooms than required	3.9	10.8	3.4	10.6	12.8	9.0	3.1	9.9	1.9	13.9
% of people living in social housing	13.3	17.4	13.0	6.9	30.2	24.5	13.1	11.2	10.4	15.3
% of people living in private rented housing or living rent free	17.1	28.6	16.3	26.5	32.3	24.7	14.6	46.5	18.2	43.6
Isolation										
% of people living in a household with no access to a car or van	10.3	15.7	9.9	12.2	22.7	15.1	9.6	13.8	14.2	19.7
Education										
% of people aged 16-24 with no qualifications	10.7	13.0	10.5	11.8	12.3	12.3	10.0	19.6	13.2	22.8
% of people aged 25-34 with level 4 qualifications or above	44.2	52.7	43.4	60.9	50.0	47.4	43.5	41.9	65.2	37.3
Employment										
% of people aged 25-49 who are unemployed	4.2	8.9	3.8	8.7	8.6	6.5	3.8	3.1	4.2	14.7
% of people aged 25-49 in higher managerial, admin. and professional occupations	17.8	16.3	17.9	18.6	11.2	17.5	18.3	13.4	25.0	12.1

⁷⁹ Census 2021

Table 23: Outcomes by ethnic group in England, 2021⁸⁰

	All	Aggregated Ethnic Groups		Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	Black, black British, black Welsh, Caribbean or African	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	White Minorities		Other ethnic group
		Ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities)	White					White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White	White: Irish	
Health and disability										
% of people aged 65 and over with a long-term limiting illness or disability	35.2	35.3	35.2	34.7	36.4	35.9	35.3	31.7	35.8	35.4
% of people aged 65 and over in poor health	12.6	16.4	12.3	17.2	14.5	14.0	12.3	13.0	14.1	17.1
Housing										
% of people living in a household with fewer bedrooms than required	8.6	22.8	5.3	23.5	27.3	13.9	4.4	15.5	3.5	23.3
% of people living in social housing	16.6	23.0	15.1	12.8	43.9	26.2	15.5	10.8	14.2	23.0
% of people living in private rented housing or living rent free	20.9	28.3	19.1	26.1	27.6	28.0	16.1	53.2	19.2	39.7
Isolation										
% of people living in a household with no access to a car or van	17.8	24.4	16.2	18.4	34.7	25.8	15.0	28.3	25.5	29.2
Education										
% of people aged 16-24 with no qualifications	11.1	10.5	11.2	9.3	10.3	11.4	10.8	16.0	6.9	15.2
% of people aged 25-34 with level 4 qualifications or above	47.7	57.7	44.8	60.5	58.2	52.9	43.4	51.3	72.5	50.6
Employment										
% of people aged 25-49 who are unemployed	6.9	13.4	5.1	14.1	11.5	8.1	5.3	3.9	3.7	18.2
% of people aged 25-49 in higher managerial, admin. and professional occupations	17.3	17.0	17.4	19.1	12.3	18.4	17.3	17.5	28.8	14.5

⁸⁰ Census 2021

What does the data tell us?

- Gloucestershire is characterised by a comparatively small population of people from ethnic minority backgrounds (excluding white minorities). The 2021 census showed people from ethnic minority backgrounds (excluding white minorities) account for 6.9% of the population; this was much lower than the England figure of 19.0%.
- The population of Gloucestershire is however, becoming increasingly diverse. The population of people from ethnic minority backgrounds (excluding white minorities) increased by 63.8% between 2011 and 2021, from 4.6% to 6.9% of the population. The number of people from the other white ethnic group increased by 55.1% during the same period, from 3.1% of the population in 2011 to 4.5% of the population in 2021.
- Gloucestershire's 0-15 year old population is more diverse than other age groups, which may have implications for service delivery.
- There are differences in outcomes between ethnic groups in health/disability, housing, education and employment.

Religion

Current population

According to the 2021 Census, 49.2% of residents in Gloucestershire were Christian, making it the most common religion. This was followed by No religion which accounts for 41.4% of the total population.

Gloucestershire has a higher proportion of people who are Christian, have no religion, or didn't specify any religion compared with national figures. In contrast it has a lower proportion of people who follow a religion other than Christianity, which reflects the ethnic composition of the county.

At district level:

- Cheltenham had the lowest proportion of people who are Christian at 45.5% of the total population. This was lower than the county and marginally lower than the national figure.
- Cotswold had the highest proportion of people who follow Christianity.
- Cheltenham had the highest proportion of Buddhists and people who have no religion.
- Gloucester had the highest proportion of Muslims, at 4.7% of its population.
- Stroud had the highest proportion of people who follow an 'Other Religion' and of people who did not state their religion.

Table 24: Religion in Gloucestershire 2021⁸¹

	% of population								
	Christian	Buddhist	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Other Religion	No Religion	Religion not stated
Cheltenham	45.5	0.5	1.0	0.2	1.5	0.2	0.5	44.4	6.3
Cotswold	55.7	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.5	36.7	6.0
Forest of Dean	50.5	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.6	41.6	6.4
Gloucester	47.7	0.3	1.0	0.0	4.7	0.2	0.5	39.7	6.0
Stroud	47.5	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.7	44.1	6.5
Tewkesbury	51.0	0.4	0.7	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.4	40.8	6.0
Gloucestershire	49.2	0.4	0.6	0.1	1.4	0.1	0.5	41.4	6.2
England	46.3	0.5	1.8	0.5	6.7	0.9	0.6	36.7	6.0

Table 25: Religion by age, Gloucestershire⁸²

	% of age group		
	0-15	16-64	65+
Christian	37.6	43.6	74.4
Buddhist	0.2	0.5	0.2
Hindu	0.8	0.6	0.3
Jewish	0.1	0.1	0.1
Muslim	2.5	1.5	0.4
Sikh	0.1	0.1	0.0
Other religion	0.2	0.7	0.3
No religion	51.1	46.7	18.7
Religion not stated	7.4	6.1	5.5

⁸¹ Census 2021

⁸² *Ibid.*

Population change (2011-2021)

Between 2011 and 2021 the number of Christians in the county declined by 16.2%. This was accompanied by an increase in all religions, with the greatest percentage increases being seen in the number of Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, and people following no religion. This trend was also reflected at a regional, national and district level. There are many factors that may be contributing to the changing religious composition shown in the census, including differing patterns of ageing, fertility, mortality, and migration. Changes may also be caused by differences in the way individuals chose to answer the religion question between censuses.⁸³

Table 26: Change in religion 2011-2021, Gloucestershire⁸⁴

	Number of people		% change
	2011	2021	2011- 2021
Christian	379,144	317,610	-16.2
Buddhist	1,772	2,383	34.5
Hindu	2,222	3,777	70.0
Jewish	539	688	27.6
Muslim	5,741	9,347	62.8
Sikh	449	761	69.5
Other religion	2,940	3,511	19.4
No religion	159,496	266,959	67.4
Religion not stated	44,681	40,042	-10.4

What does the data tell us?

- The most reported religion in Gloucestershire is Christianity, accounting for 49.2% of the total population, which is higher than the national figure.
- Those aged 0-15 are less likely to be Christian than the older population and are more likely to report no religion.
- The number of Christians in the county has declined since 2001, reflecting the national trend.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Census 2011 and Census 2021

Sexual Orientation

The 'protected characteristic' of sexual orientation refers to those individuals who are attracted to those of the opposite sex, the same sex, or either sex. There is a substantial body of evidence demonstrating that lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people experience discrimination and marginalisation in their daily lives including in health care, social care, housing, education, at work, and in public. As a result, they may experience specific health inequalities.⁸⁵

Although attitudes towards gay people are improving, most lesbian, gay and bisexual people have experienced difficulties in their lives. Being LGB does not cause mental health problems, however experiences of discrimination and harassment in day-to-day life, rejection from one's family and friends and being subjected to hate crimes and incidents can have a negative impact on mental well-being.⁸⁶ As a consequence, people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) are more likely to have experienced depression or anxiety, attempted suicide or had suicidal thoughts and self-harmed than men and women in general.⁸⁷

Research shows that older LGB(TQ+) people are especially vulnerable to loneliness as they are more likely to be single, live alone, and have lower levels of contact with relatives. They are also less likely to engage with local services, with recent findings showing that over four fifths of older LGB(T) people do not trust professionals to understand their culture or lifestyle.⁸⁸ The Office for National Statistics report that LGB people report a lower quality of life than the UK average across all their measures of quality of life.⁸⁹

In 2017 the government launched a National LGBT Survey about the experiences of LGBT people in the UK – the largest national LGBT survey to date.⁹⁰ Although many responses were positive, there were more than 2 in 5 who said they had been victim of verbal abuse or physical violence during the preceding year. In addition, more than 9 out of 10 serious incidents were not reported as respondents felt 'it happens all the time'. Fear of crime and

⁸⁵ OHID (2013) The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Public Health Outcomes Framework Companion Document;
<https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/LGBT%20Public%20Health%20Outcomes%20Framework%20Companion%20Doc.pdf> Accessed 30/01/2026

National Institute of Economic and Social Research (2016), Inequality among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups in the UK: a review of evidence
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539682/160719_REPORT_LGBT_evidence_review_NIESR_FINALPDF.pdf Accessed 02/12/2024

⁸⁶ [LGBT in Britain - Health \(2018\) | Stonewall](#)

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ [LGBT Charity UK Lgbt Over 50's | | LGBT CHARITY UK](#)

⁸⁹ [ONS Lesbian, gay, and bisexual people say they experience a lower quality of life - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

⁹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-lgbt-survey-summary-report/national-lgbt-survey-summary-report#the-results>

of negative reactions from other people was also a reported issue, with more than two thirds of respondents stating they have avoided holding hands with their (same sex) partners for this reason.

Current population

As with gender identity, the Census 2021 has provided the first set of official data on sexual orientation in England and Wales. In the 2021 Census there was a new question around sexual orientation, asking 'which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?', and providing a list of options. It was directed only at people aged 16 and over, and answers were voluntary. Overall, 93.2% of residents in Gloucestershire aged 16 and over answered the question. The majority of people who answered described their sexual orientation as 'straight or heterosexual' (90.4% of the population). This is slightly higher than the national average of 89.4%.

There were almost 15,000 people (2.8%) who described their sexual orientation as being in one of the LGB+ categories. This is lower than the national average of 3.2%.

A total of almost 36,200 people chose not to answer this voluntary question, which is more than double the total number of LGB+ people who did choose to respond. Due to the sensitive nature of the question, it might be reasonable to assume that some LGB+ people felt reticent to provide an answer.⁹¹ The approximate figure of 15,000 LGB+ people should be regarded as the minimum number in the county, but this could potentially be considerably higher.

⁹¹ LGBT Foundation [LGBT Foundation - LGBT Foundation cautiously welcomes the first snapshot of LGBTQ+ identities in the Census.](#)

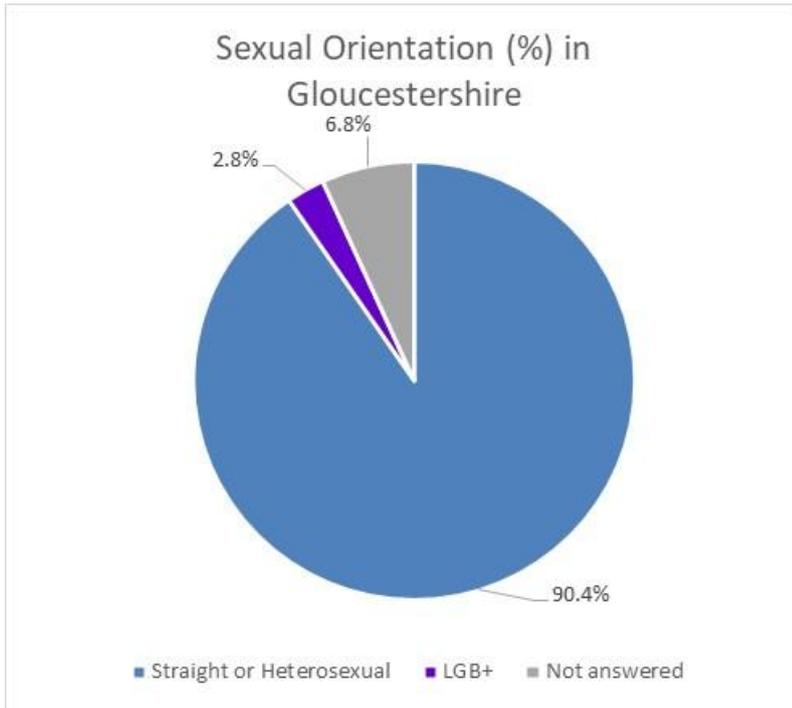


Figure 7: Proportion of Gloucestershire residents aged 16 and over by broad sexual orientation category, 2021⁹²

The 2021 Census found that within Gloucestershire the most common LGB+ sexual orientation was 'gay or lesbian'. More than 6,800 people (1.3%) described their sexual orientation as this. The next most common LGB+ sexual orientation was 'bisexual', with more than 6,400 people (1.2%). All other LGB+ sexual orientations accounted for almost 1,700 residents in Gloucestershire (0.3%). This figure included 'pansexual', 'asexual', 'queer', and 'all other sexual orientations'.

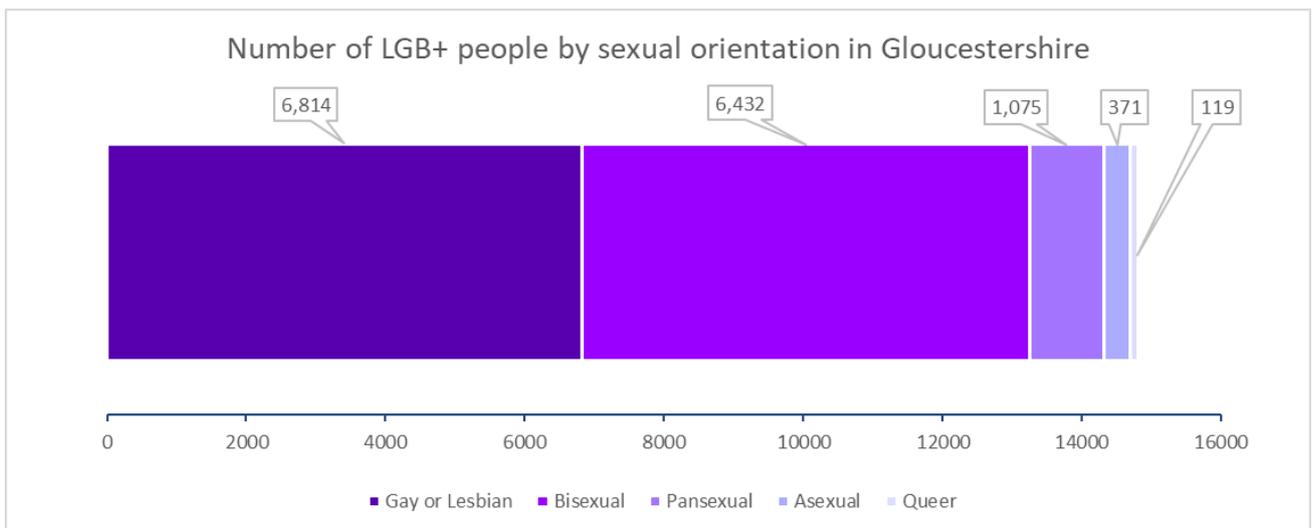


Figure 8: Number of Gloucestershire LGB+ residents aged 16 and over by sexual orientation, 2021⁹³

⁹² Census 2021

⁹³ *Ibid.*

At district level:

- Cheltenham has the largest proportion of residents describing their sexual orientation as being LGB+ at 3.9%. This exceeds both the county and national average of 2.8% and 3.2% respectively.
- Cheltenham also has the largest proportion of people in the county who describe their sexual orientation as 'gay or lesbian', at 1.6%. This exceeds the county and national average of 1.3% and 1.5% respectively. By contrast, Forest of Dean has the smallest proportion, at 1.0%.
- Cheltenham and Gloucester have the highest proportion of people describing their sexual orientation as 'bisexual', at 1.8% and 1.4% respectively. Both exceed the county and national average of 1.2% and 1.3% respectively.

Table 27: Gloucestershire Residents aged 16+ by Sexual Orientation, 2021⁹⁴

	Straight or Heterosexual		Gay or Lesbian		Bisexual		All other sexual orientations		Not answered	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cheltenham	87,790	89.2	1,581	1.6	1,812	1.8	443	0.5	6,810	6.9
Cotswold	69,820	91.5	876	1.1	649	0.9	143	0.2	4,826	6.3
Forest of Dean	66,188	90.6	747	1.0	705	1.0	210	0.3	5,197	7.1
Gloucester	96,058	89.8	1,487	1.4	1,450	1.4	378	0.4	7,564	7.1
Stroud	90,493	90.3	1,246	1.2	1,153	1.2	315	0.3	6,989	7.0
Tewkesbury	70,842	91.6	875	1.1	663	0.9	170	0.2	4,802	6.2
Gloucestershire	481,191	90.4	6,814	1.3	6,432	1.2	1,660	0.3	36,188	6.8
England	41,114,478	89.4	709,704	1.5	591,690	1.3	158,357	0.4	3,432,728	7.5

Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding

What does this tell us?

- The proportion of LGB+ residents aged 16 and over in Gloucestershire (2.8%) is lower than the national average (3.2%).
- The most common LGB+ sexual orientation in Gloucestershire in 2021 was 'gay or lesbian', accounting for more than 6,800 people (1.3%).
- Cheltenham has the largest proportion of residents describing their sexual orientation as being LGB+ at 3.9%. This exceeds both the county and national average of 2.8% and 3.2% respectively.
- There are at least 15,000 LGB+ people in the county, but this could potentially be considerably higher.

⁹⁴ Census 2021

Section 3

Cross Cutting Themes

Hate Crime in Gloucestershire⁹⁵

A common theme relating to many of the nine protected characteristics is the increased likelihood of being a victim of crime. Although the Equality Act (2010) relates to nine protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, civil partnership and marriage), Home Office reported hate crime has five monitored strands. These are race, religion/faith, sexual orientation, disability, and gender identity. Crimes based on hostility to age, sex, or appearance, for example, can also be hate crimes, although they are not part of the five centrally monitored strands.⁹⁶ Hate crime is defined as 'Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity.'⁹⁷

According to the Home Office Official Statistics ending March 2025, police recorded hate offences in England and Wales (excluding the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS))⁹⁸ increased to 115,990 offences reported in 2024/25, an increase of 2.5% from the previous year ending March 2024 (113,166 offences). The bulletin states that the upward trend in hate crime up to March 2022 was thought to have been mainly driven by improvements in crime recording by the police and better identification of what constitutes a hate crime. Because of these changes, police recorded crime figures do not provide reliable trends in hate crime since 2014. However, there have been rises in hate crime following certain events such as the EU Referendum in June 2016, the terrorist attacks in 2017, and following the widespread Black Lives Matter protests and far-right counter-protests during the summer of 2020; the spike in religious hate crime over the last year was driven by a rise in offences against Jewish people, as well as, to a lesser extent, Muslims, since the start of the Israel-Hamas conflict.⁹⁹

In Gloucestershire in 2024/25 there were 1,288 hate crimes reported – a decrease of 9.4% from the previous year. Race-related hate crime was the most reported strand of hate

⁹⁵ Gloucestershire Community Safety Strategic Needs Assessment, April 2018
[overview.pdf \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](#)

⁹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/an-overview-of-hate-crime-in-england-and-wales>

⁹⁷ Crown Prosecution Service, [Hate crime | The Crown Prosecution Service \(cps.gov.uk\)](#)

⁹⁸ Due to a change in crime recording system by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), their data is excluded from year-on-year comparisons.

⁹⁹ [Hate crime, England and Wales, year ending March 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

crime, amounting to 67.3% (826 cases) of all reported hate crime in the county. This strand of hate crime has seen a decrease of 6.1% (54 reported cases) from the previous year. All reported hate crime strands saw a decrease on the previous year.

Between years 2013/14 and 2022/23 the number of recorded offences increased each year across most of the five monitored hate crime strands; however total recorded hate crime has been decreasing each year since 2022/23. Disability related hate crime has seen the largest proportional increase in Gloucestershire since 2013/14, rising from 6 reported cases to 101 cases in 2024/25, an increase of 95.

Since 2013/14, the police have improved their identification of what constitutes a hate crime, and their crime recording practices; the general increase in reporting may be linked to greater confidence in the police and other responsible authorities, as hate crime is frequently underreported. The more hate crime is reported, the more agencies will understand the scale of the problem and how to support the victim.

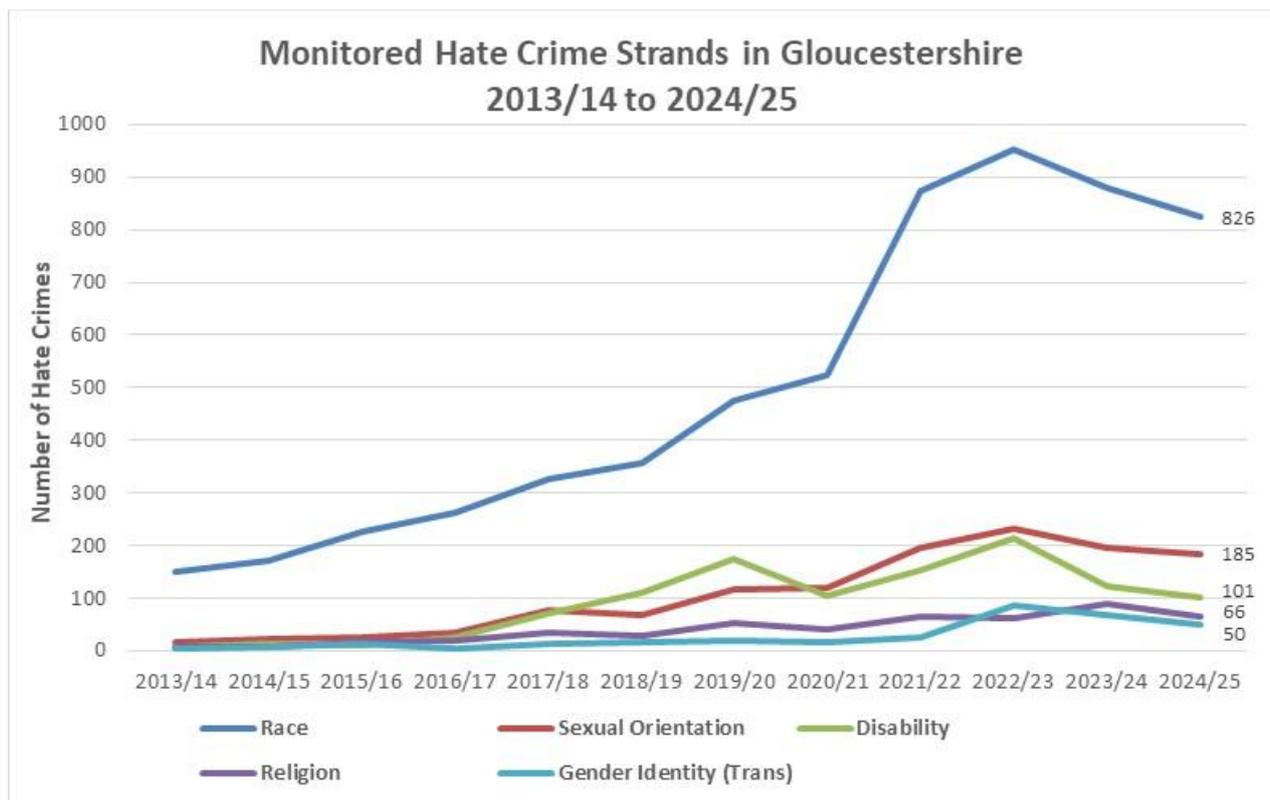


Figure 9: Monitored Hate Crime Strands in Gloucestershire, 2013/14 to 2024/25¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Gloucestershire Constabulary data

Additional Hate Crime Strands Monitored by Gloucestershire Constabulary

In addition to monitoring and reporting on the five hate crime strands, Gloucestershire Constabulary also flags and monitors additional hate crimes such as Age, Sex, Alternative Subcultures and Homelessness.

Figure 10 provides a breakdown of all hate crimes monitored by Gloucestershire Constabulary.

Of the additional hate crimes monitored, hate crimes based on the sex of the victim accounted for the greatest number, totalling 48 in 2024/25. However, there has been a decrease in reporting of 11% from the previous year's total of 54.

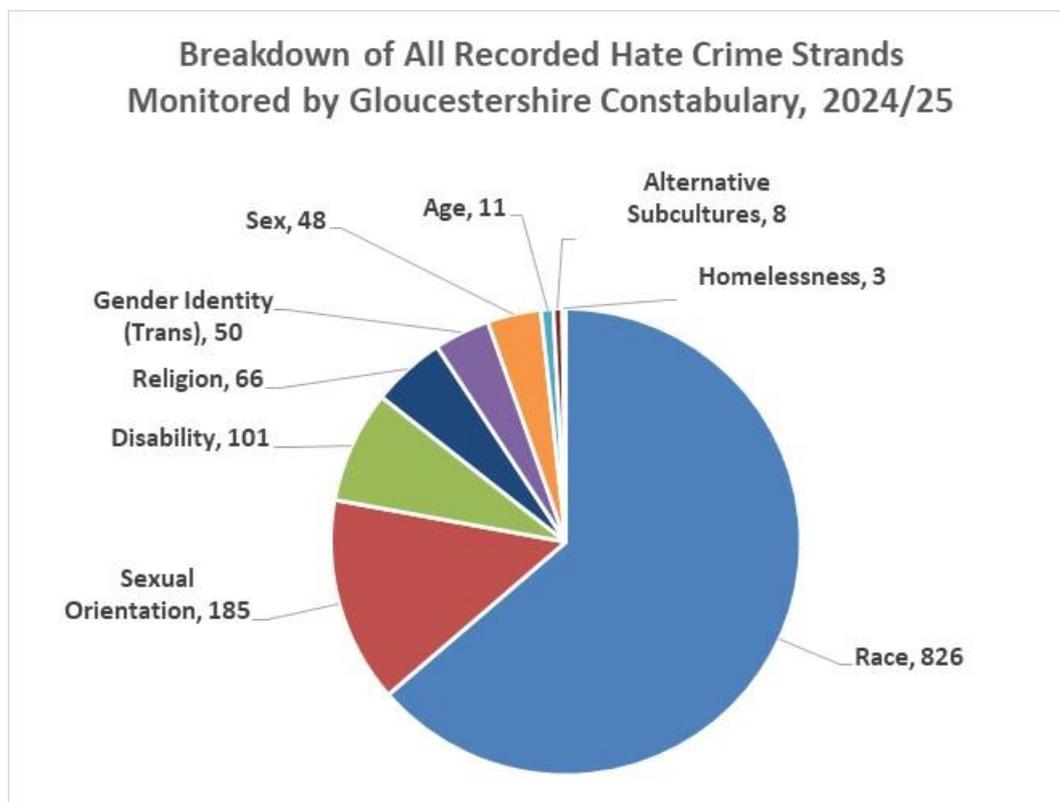


Figure 10: Breakdown of All Recorded Hate Crimes Monitored by Gloucestershire Constabulary in Gloucestershire, 2024/25¹⁰¹

What does this tell us?

- There has been an increasing trend in recorded hate crime between 2013/14 and 2022/23, due to improved crime recording practices and identification of what constitutes a hate crime, however in the post recent two years there has been a decline.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

- Race related hate crime is the most reported strand of hate crime in Gloucestershire, by a large margin.

Section 4

Additional Groups

Gloucestershire County Council has begun to consider additional groups beyond the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, when carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA).¹⁰² This type of change has already been made by some other local authorities and parts of the NHS. It is anticipated that including additional groups will help to ensure a wider range of equality issues or opportunities are identified and understood through the equality assessment process. As a result, it is more likely that policies, services and other developments are designed, developed and implemented in a way that prevents unfair treatment and promotes a more fair and equal society.

The additional groups now considered include:

- Armed Forces Community
- Carers
- Care leavers
- Digital Exclusion
- Geography (rural/urban areas)
- Socio-economic disadvantage

This section of the report will provide information about each of these groups.

Armed Forces Community

The armed forces community includes:

- those serving in HM Armed Forces or Armed Forces Reserves
- ex-servicemen and women (veterans)
- the dependents of serving and ex-service personnel (e.g. spouses, civil partners and children)
- the bereaved; the immediate family of service personnel and ex-service personnel who have died, whether or not that death has any connection with service

Local authorities, national government, businesses, local authorities, charities and the public have committed to support the Armed Forces community through the Armed Forces

¹⁰² [Equality impact assessment \(EqIA\) | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

Covenant.¹⁰³ It was adopted in 2011 and articulated the principles of no disadvantage and special consideration; that no current or former member of the armed forces, or their families, should be at a disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services.

This was followed by the Armed Forces Act 2021 which introduced a new requirement for some public bodies, including the NHS and local authorities, to pay due regard to the principles of the Covenant when carrying out specific public functions in the areas of housing, healthcare and education.

Current population

The information captured relates to armed forces veterans rather than current personnel and was captured by the 2021 Census.

In 2021 there were 27,418 people who had previously served in the UK armed forces resident in Gloucestershire. This equates to 5.2% of the 16+ population. This is just over 1 in 20 people aged 16 years and over in Gloucestershire. The proportion of armed forces veterans was higher in Gloucestershire than it was across England (3.8%).

All districts in Gloucestershire had a higher proportion of armed forces veterans than the national average. Cheltenham had the lowest proportion of armed forces veterans at 4.5%, while Tewkesbury had the highest proportion at 6.2% of the 16+ population.

Gloucestershire and its districts had a higher proportion of residents who had served in UK regular armed forces than England. The proportion of Gloucestershire residents who had served in the UK reserve armed forces or both the regular and reserve armed forces was in line with the national average.

¹⁰³ [The Armed Forces Covenant | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

Table 28: Gloucestershire Residents aged 16+ by UK armed forces status (%), 2021¹⁰⁴

	Previously served in UK regular armed forces	Previously served in UK reserve armed forces	Previously served in both regular and reserve UK armed forces	Previously served in regular or reserved UK armed forces
Cheltenham	3.4	0.8	0.2	4.5
Cotswold	4.6	0.9	0.3	5.7
Forest of Dean	4.3	0.8	0.2	5.4
Gloucester	3.8	0.7	0.2	4.8
Stroud	3.7	0.9	0.2	4.8
Tewkesbury	5.1	0.8	0.3	6.2
Gloucestershire	4.1	0.8	0.2	5.2
England	2.9	0.7	0.2	3.8

9.2% of households (25,598) in Gloucestershire included one or more UK armed forces veterans. This was higher than the national average of 7.0%. At district level Tewkesbury had the highest proportion of households where at least one person had served in the armed forces at 10.8%.

Table 29: Proportion of households where at least 1 person in the household previously served in UK armed forces (%)¹⁰⁵

	At least 1 person in the household previously served in UK armed forces
Cheltenham	7.7
Cotswold	10.1
Forest of Dean	9.9
Gloucester	8.7
Stroud	8.6
Tewkesbury	10.8
Gloucestershire	9.2
England	7.0

¹⁰⁴ 2021 Census, ONS

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

There is substantial variation between the age profiles of the veteran and non-veteran populations. The veteran population is much older with 53.5% being aged 65 and over.

Table 30: Age profile of UK armed forces veterans (%)¹⁰⁶

	Ages 16-24	Ages 25-34	Ages 35-49	Ages 50-64	Ages 65+
Cheltenham	1.6	5.3	12.6	24.9	55.7
Cotswold	0.8	3.1	12.6	27.6	55.9
Forest of Dean	1.1	3.9	12.2	29.7	53.0
Gloucester	1.1	5.0	15.5	29.9	48.6
Stroud	0.9	3.1	13.5	27.5	55.1
Tewkesbury	0.8	4.9	13.8	27.1	53.5
Gloucestershire	1.0	4.3	13.5	27.8	53.5
England	1.6	5.5	13.8	25.9	53.2

Carers

An unpaid carer may look after, give help or support to anyone who has long term physical or mental ill-health conditions, illness or problems.

Caring responsibilities can have an adverse impact on the physical and mental health, education and employment potential of those who care, which can result in significantly poorer health and quality of life outcomes.¹⁰⁷

Current picture

This information is based on self-reported caring status according to the 2021 Census, this means figures will be different from sources which look at registered carers.

In 2021, there were 51,862 people aged 5+ providing unpaid care in Gloucestershire, this is equivalent to 8.5% of the population. In comparison, a slightly higher proportion of the population in England (8.8%) said they provided unpaid care.

At district level, Forest of Dean had the highest proportion of unpaid carers (9.7%) and was the only district to exceed the county and national average. Conversely, Cheltenham had the lowest proportion of unpaid carers (7.4%). Forest of Dean also had the highest proportion of residents providing very high levels of care (50 hours a week), with 2.9% of

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ [State of Caring survey | Carers UK](#)

residents providing this level of care, higher than the county (2.3%) and national average (2.6%).

Table 31: Gloucestershire Residents aged 16+ by caring status (%), 2021¹⁰⁸

	Percentage of population aged 5+						
	Provides no unpaid care	Provides unpaid care: total	Provides 9 hours or less unpaid care a week	Provides 10 to 19 hours unpaid care a week	Provides 20 to 34 hours unpaid care a week	Provides 35 to 49 hours unpaid care a week	Provides 50 or more hours unpaid care a week
Cheltenham	92.6	7.4	3.3	0.9	0.6	0.7	1.9
Cotswold	91.9	8.1	3.6	1.0	0.7	0.6	2.2
Forest of Dean	90.3	9.7	3.7	1.3	0.9	0.9	2.9
Gloucester	91.6	8.4	3.1	1.1	0.8	1.0	2.4
Stroud	91.1	8.9	4.1	1.2	0.7	0.7	2.2
Tewkesbury	91.5	8.5	3.6	1.1	0.7	0.7	2.4
Gloucestershire	91.5	8.5	3.6	1.1	0.7	0.8	2.3
England	91.2	8.8	3.1	1.2	0.8	1.0	2.6

The largest proportion of carers is aged 55-64, with 26.8% of unpaid carers in Gloucestershire falling into this age bracket. However, it is worth noting 26.8% of Gloucestershire carers are aged over 65, and 1.6% are aged 5-15.

¹⁰⁸ 2021 Census, ONS

Table 32: Age Profile of Unpaid Carers (%)¹⁰⁹

	Ages 5-15	Ages 16-24	Ages 25-34	Ages 35-44	Ages 45-54	Ages 55-64	Ages 65-74	Ages 75+
Cheltenham	1.6	4.9	8.9	12.5	20.6	26.7	13.9	10.9
Cotswold	1.1	3.3	5.9	9.5	19.6	29.3	16.8	14.5
Forest of Dean	1.2	4.3	7.4	10.1	20.2	26.9	17.8	12.1
Gloucester	2.4	5.8	9.7	14.8	21.1	24.5	12.5	9.2
Stroud	1.4	3.8	7.0	10.4	21.6	27.8	16.7	11.2
Tewkesbury	1.5	3.8	7.3	12.3	21.5	26.5	15.3	11.8
Gloucestershire	1.6	4.4	7.8	11.7	20.9	26.8	15.4	11.4
England	1.7	5.5	9.9	14.0	21.3	24.4	13.7	9.6

Carers are also more likely to be female with 59.2% of carers in Gloucestershire compared to 50.5% of non-carers.

Care leavers

A care leaver in the UK is *an adult who has spent time in foster or residential care*.

The Independent Review of Children’s Social Care, published in May 2022 (The “MacAlister review”), recognised the often negative outcomes for people with care experience and recommended that the government should make ‘Care Experienced’ a protected characteristic.

There are a range of barriers and discrimination care leavers can face throughout life, including but not limited to:

- 70% of people who have been in care die earlier than would otherwise be expected
- Over half of those in custody up to the age of 21 have been in care
- A quarter of the homeless population in England and Wales has experienced of the care system¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ [The-independent-review-of-childrens-social-care-Final-report.pdf](#)

Current picture

This information relates to care leavers who received care funded by Gloucestershire County Council (who may or may not be living in Gloucestershire). Information is not available about care leavers who have moved into the county but received care from elsewhere. In addition, data is only collected about those care leavers whose 19th, 20th or 21st birthday fell between 1st April and 31st March of the reporting year. For 2025 there were 378 people that fell into that category.¹¹¹

Digital Exclusion

This relates to those people who are disproportionately disadvantaged by the increasing turn to digital.

Current picture

Very little information is collected about this group. The latest information taken from the Participation Survey¹¹² is at district level and covers the period from May 2023 to March 2024. The survey shows that the percentage of respondents from Forest of Dean and Gloucester aged 16 and over who have used the internet either at home or anywhere else is 91.3% and 92.3% respectively, which are both lower than the England average of 92.7%. Cheltenham shows the highest percentage of respondents using the internet at 96.9%, followed by Stroud and Tewkesbury at 95.9% and 95.8% respectively. The percentages for these three districts are all significantly higher than the England average.

¹¹¹ LAIT, DFE, [Local Authority Interactive Tool \(LAIT\) - LA Level: Gloucestershire, Leaving Care 2 & 4 - Number of former relevant young people \(Care Leavers\)](#)

¹¹² [Participation Survey 2023–24 annual publication - GOV.UK](#)

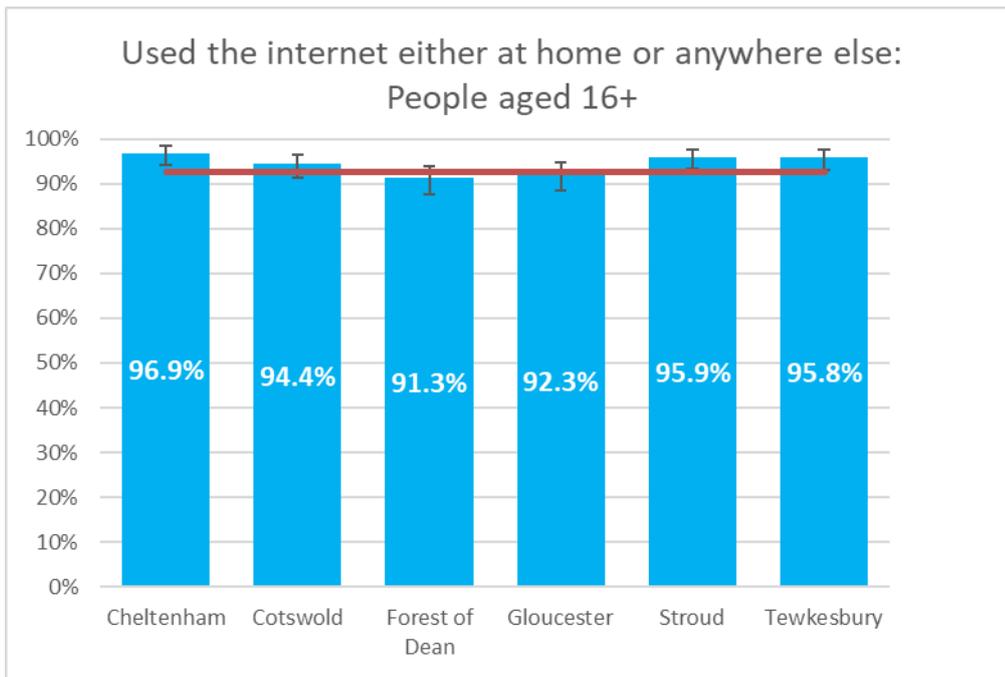


Figure 11: Percentage of respondents aged 16 and over who have used the internet either at home or anywhere else, by district¹¹³

Geography (rural/urban areas)

This includes specific areas and rural/urban geographies and how this can make it difficult for some people to access the services they need.

Current picture

The 2021 Rural-Urban Classification (RUC) is a statistical classification system used to categorise geographies based on the form and characteristics of the settlements present within them. It aims to provide a consistent and standardised method for classifying areas as Rural or Urban, based on address density, physical settlement form, population size, and relative accessibility.

It shows that the majority of the county (87.5% of the total area) is comprised of Output Areas that are classified as Rural. However, in 2024 only 28.7% of the county's population resided in Output Areas that fell into this category. Gloucestershire's Urban Output Areas accommodate the majority (71.3%) of the county's total population. Gloucestershire has a significantly higher proportion of its population living in rural areas than the national average (17.4%). At district level, 78.9% of Cotswold's population live in rural areas. Forest of Dean has the second highest proportion of residents in the county living in rural areas (65.0%). Conversely, in Cheltenham and Gloucester, 100% of the population live in urban areas.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Rural/Urban Classification 2021, ONS and Mid 2024 Population Estimates, ONS

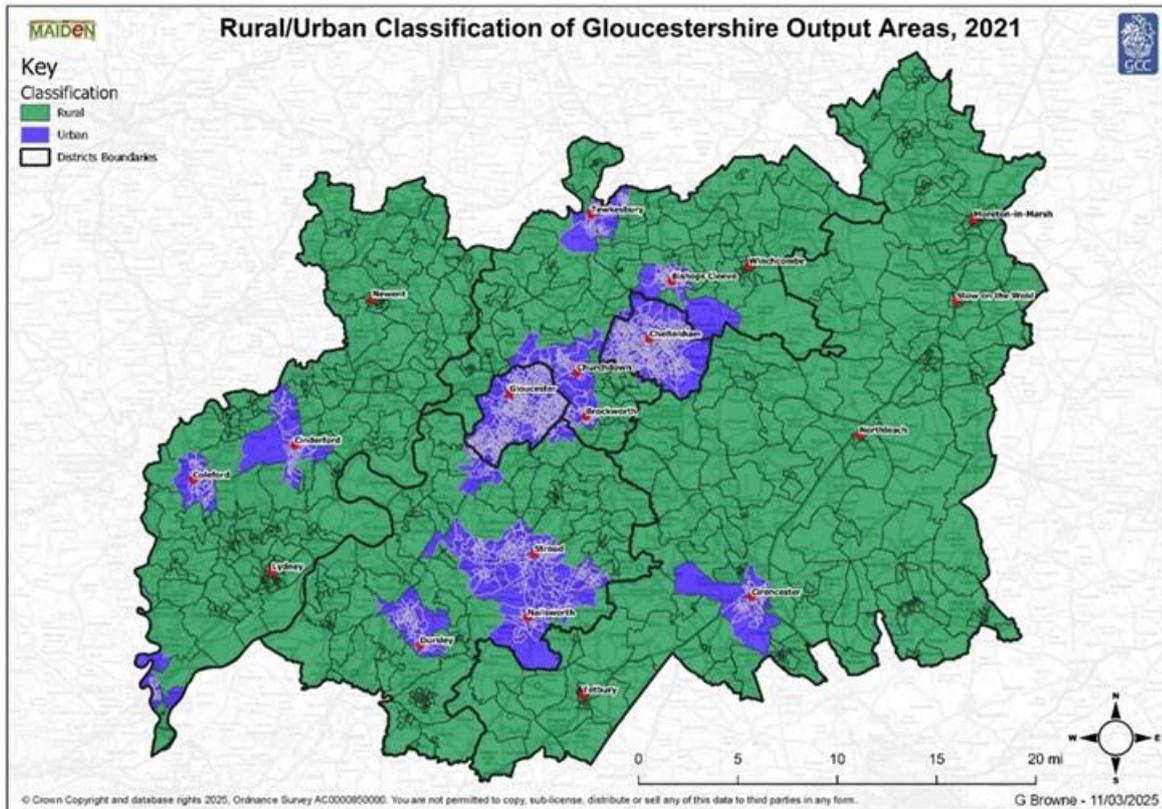


Figure 12: Rural/urban classification of Output Areas, 2021¹¹⁵

Socio-economic disadvantage

Being 'socio-economically disadvantaged' means living in less favourable social and economic circumstances than others in the same society.

Current picture

The main measure for this is the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. In general, Gloucestershire is not a very deprived county, ranking 124 out of 153 (where 1 is the most deprived) county and unitary authorities, putting it in the least deprived 20% of authorities across England.¹¹⁶

At district level, even the most deprived districts in the county (Gloucester City, and Forest of Dean) are amongst the middle 20% of districts for deprivation out of 296 English authorities. Tewkesbury, Cheltenham, and Cotswold districts are in the least deprived 20% districts nationally.¹¹⁷ However, there are pockets of deprivation, 29 out of 393 small areas

¹¹⁵ Rural Urban Classification, 2011, ONS

¹¹⁶ Uses the measure 'Rank of Average Rank' - other measures may provide slightly different results.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

in Gloucestershire are amongst the 20% most deprived in England with 7.3% residents of Gloucestershire living in these areas.¹¹⁸

Figure 13 shows the areas amongst the most deprived 20% in England are mainly located in the urban areas of Gloucester and Cheltenham, with the exceptions of Cinderford West 1 in the Forest of Dean and Tewkesbury South 3 in Tewkesbury.

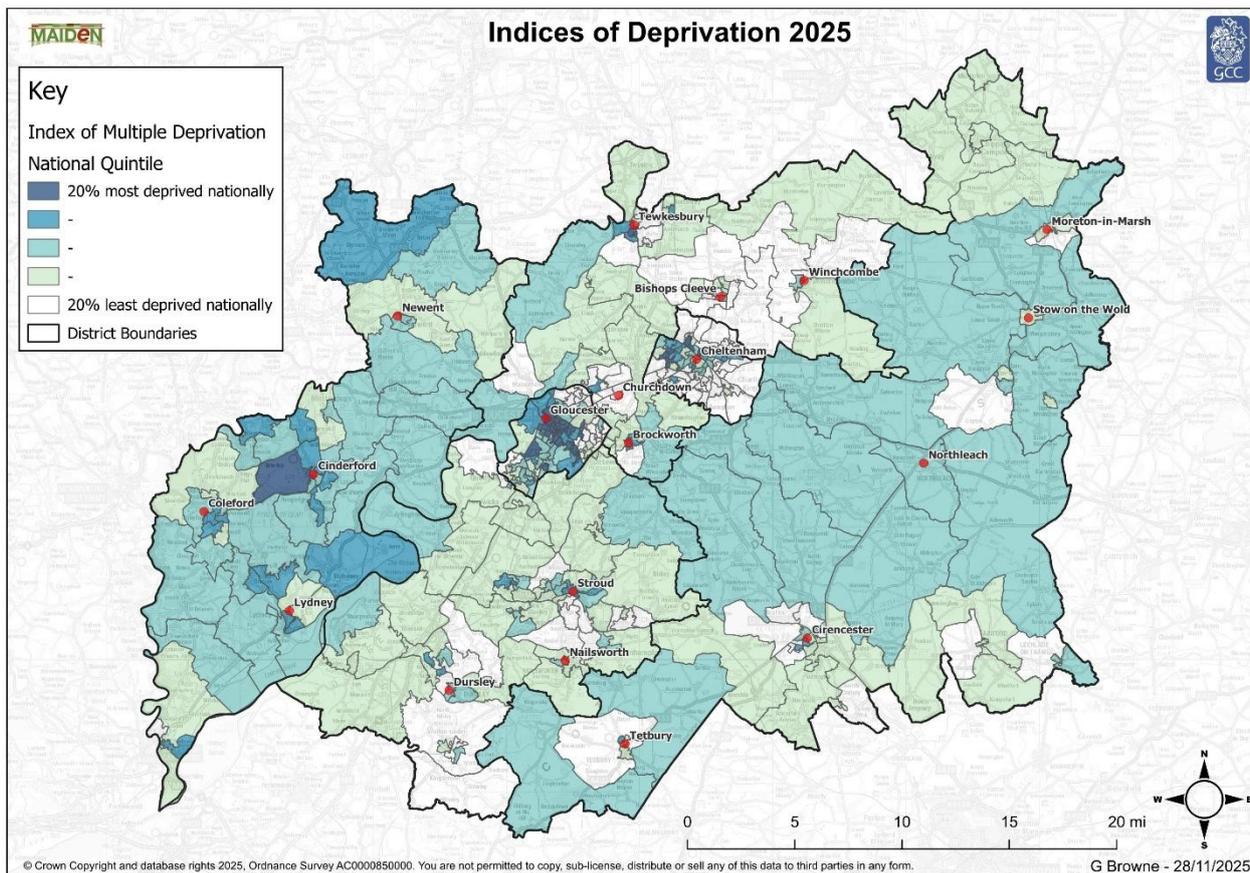


Figure 13: Indices of Deprivation, 2025

Figure 14 shows the proportion of the population in each deprivation quintile for Gloucestershire and each of the six districts in the county. In Gloucester more than 27% of the population (1 in 4 people) live in areas amongst the most deprived 20% nationally. In contrast in Cotswold and Stroud none of the population live in areas amongst the most deprived 20% nationally. Cheltenham stands out as an area with a degree of polarity, around 6% of residents live in areas amongst the most deprived 20% nationally, conversely around 53% of residents live in areas amongst the least deprived 20% nationally.

¹¹⁸ Mid 2024 Population Estimates, ONS and Indices of Deprivation 2025, MHCLG

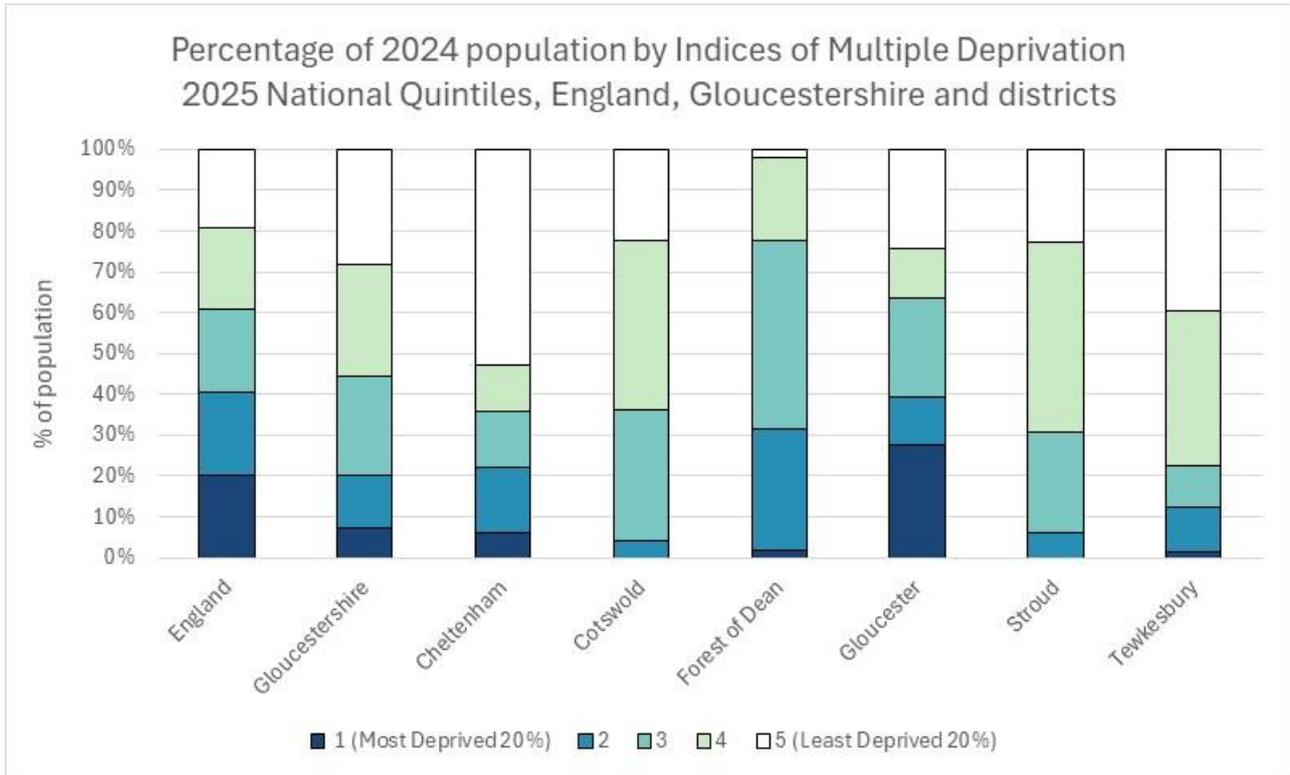


Figure 14: Percentage of 2024 population by Indices of Deprivation 2025 Quintiles, England, Gloucestershire and districts¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Mid 2024 Population Estimates, ONS and Indices of Deprivation 2025, MHCLG