

# Census 2021 Briefing

## Tenure

**GMCA Research**  
April 2023

**Dataset:** Housing Tenure

**Datalink:** The data used in this briefing can be found at [Census - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/c2021ts054). It can also be found at <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/c2021ts054>

**Definition:** Tenure is whether a household rents or owns the accommodation that it occupies. Households that rent their accommodation were also asked what type of landlord owns or manages the property.

**Census day:** The 2021 census was held in England and Wales on 21 March 2021. Census 2021 was undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic so may not show normal population and household patterns due to temporary changes in living circumstances during the pandemic for some households.

## Key points

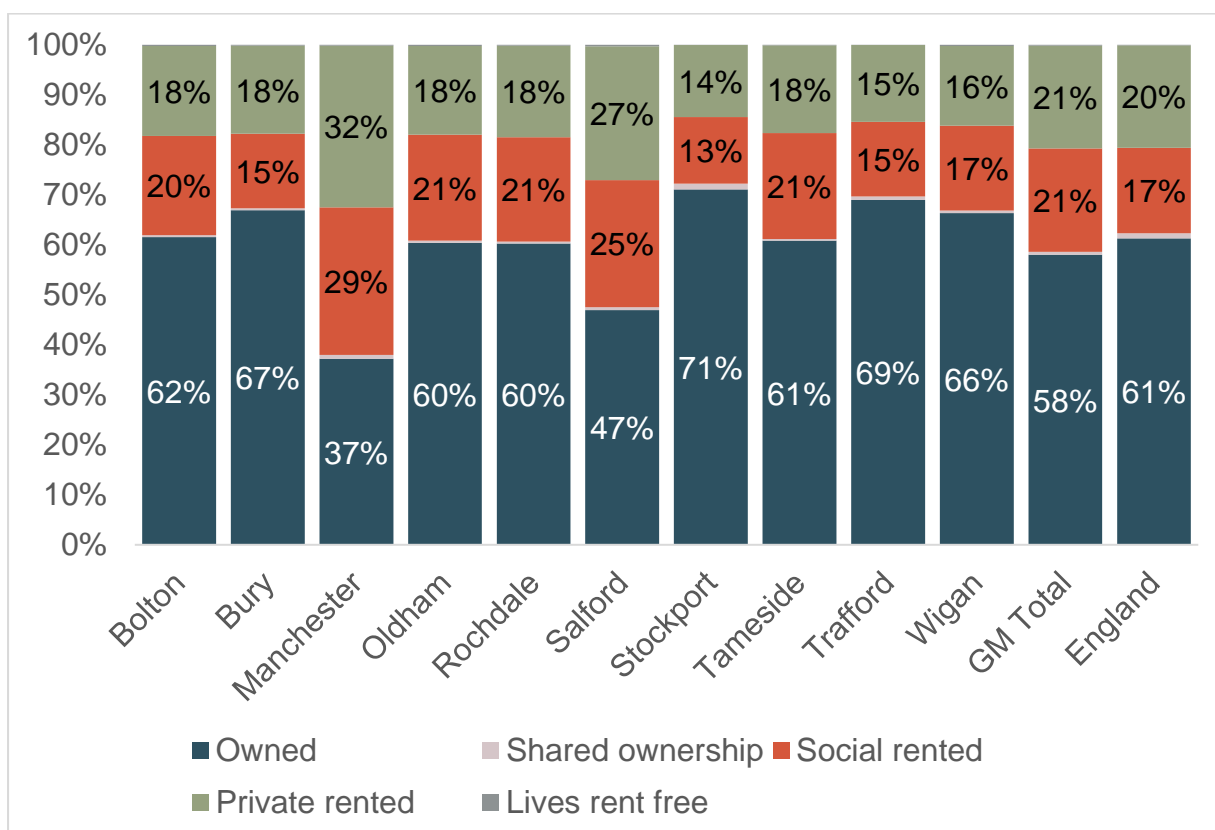
- The number of households in Greater Manchester increased by 50,178 since 2011 (a 4.4% increase).
- Households in the private rented sector (PRS) increased the most. There were 60,939 more households with this type of tenure in 2021 in Greater Manchester compared with 2011 (a 34% increase). In England, PRS households increased by 29% in the same period.
- Some 58% of households owned their properties outright in 2021. This was a slight decrease from the 60% reported in 2011.
- There was a decrease in those reporting they lived in the social rented sector in Greater Manchester between 2011 and 2021 (-4,137 households).
- In Bury, Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Trafford more households reported living in private rented accommodation than in social housing.

# Main Findings

The 2021 census reported that the total number of households in Greater Manchester was 1,178,244, an increase of 50,178 (4%) from the total of 1,128,066 recorded in 2011. In all ten local authorities in the city region there was an increase in the overall number of households. The largest increase occurred in Salford with 11,561 more households (an 11% increase) and the smallest increase was in Trafford with 1,785 (a 2% increase). In England as a whole there was a 6.2% increase in the number of households.

Households that own their own properties – either outright or with a mortgage - were the most common type of tenure in Greater Manchester in 2021 (683,585, or 58% of all households). The rates for households in the PRS and for social housing were similar (21% in each category).

## Percentage of Tenure Type in Greater Manchester and England



Source: Census 2021, [2021 Census](#)

### Tenure type by number of households, 2021

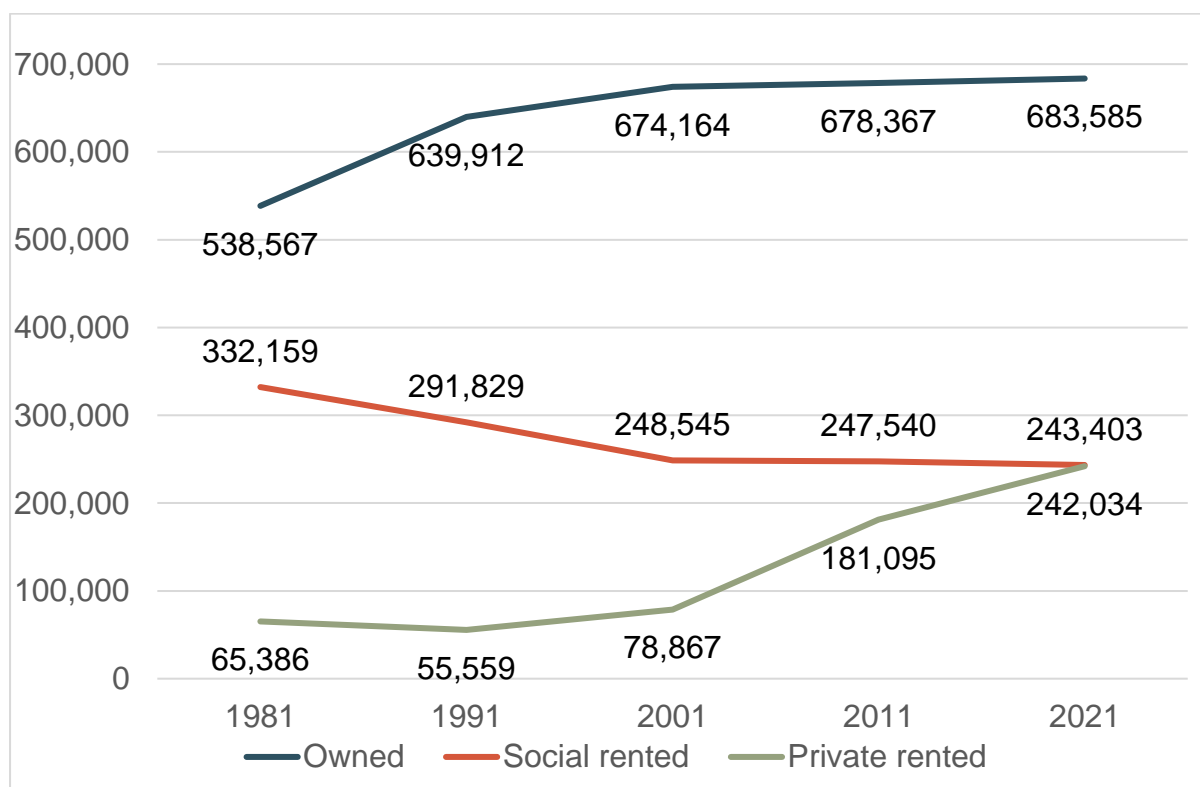
District	Owned	Shared ownership	Social rented	Private rented	Lives rent free	All households
Bolton	73,083	493	23,555	21,372	287	118,790
Bury	53,992	292	12,044	14,249	119	80,696
Manchester	79,925	1,679	63,276	69,403	447	214,730
Oldham	56,229	412	19,760	16,498	241	93,140
Rochdale	54,377	342	18,815	16,503	185	90,222
Salford	54,068	646	29,227	30,853	323	115,117
Stockport	90,025	1,486	16,849	18,192	96	126,648
Tameside	60,521	320	21,125	17,459	102	99,527
Trafford	66,387	654	14,419	14,744	65	96,269
Wigan	94,978	655	24,333	22,761	378	143,105
<b>Greater Manchester</b>	<b>683,585</b>	<b>6,979</b>	<b>243,403</b>	<b>242,034</b>	<b>2,243</b>	<b>1,178,244</b>
<b>England</b>	14,369,065	235,951	4,005,663	4,794,889	30,517	23,436,085

Source: ONS, Nomis – 2021 Census

## Household tenure change

Several categories of tenure were little changed in 2021 compared to results from the previous census in 2011. The main difference was the growth of the PRS. Between 2011 and 2021 there was a 34% increase in households with this type of tenure. Households in the PRS increased in all local authorities in Greater Manchester (ranging from increases of 19% in Manchester to 59% in Salford).

### Tenure type by number of households, Greater Manchester 1981-2021



Source: ONS, Nomis – 2021 Census

## District tenure patterns

### Households that own their homes

The majority of households in Greater Manchester owned their own homes in 2021 (58%; compared with 61% in England). The local authority with the highest proportion of owner occupiers in 2021 was Stockport (71%) and the smallest proportion was in Manchester (37%). However, the largest increase in households that own their homes was in Manchester with 2,530 additional households between 2011 and 2021. In four Greater Manchester districts there has been a decrease in owner occupiers since 2011 (Bolton, Bury, Oldham and Tameside), with Oldham showing the largest decrease (2,030 fewer owner occupiers).

## **Social housing**

In the 2021 census 21% of households (243,403) lived in social housing in Greater Manchester; this was a similar proportion to the 2011 census. The proportion is slightly above the figure for England as a whole (17%). Manchester has the largest proportion of households in social housing (29%) while Stockport has the smallest (13%). In six of the local authorities in Greater Manchester there was a reduction in social housing and in four an increase. The largest proportional increase was in Stockport (4%) and the largest decreases were in Trafford and Rochdale (both -7%). In GM as a whole, there was a -1.7% decrease in the number of households in social housing (compared with a 2.6% increase in England).

## **Private rented sector (PRS)**

Nationally and in Greater Manchester there has been an increase in the number of households living in the PRS (all ten local authorities experienced a rise in households in the PRS). The rises were largest in Salford (59%) and Oldham (51%). The total number of households living in the PRS in Greater Manchester was 242,034. The authority with the largest proportion of households in the PRS was Manchester (32%) while Stockport had the smallest (14%). Five of the Greater Manchester districts have more households in the PRS than in social housing – Bury, Manchester, Salford, Stockport and Trafford.

## **Reflections**

Both nationally and in Greater Manchester the household tenure type that has grown the most between 2011 and 2021 is the PRS – a continuation of a longer-term trend.

Yet the PRS is the least secure form of tenure. It is less regulated than other types of housing (whether social housing or owner occupation). The PRS is likely to include some of the people who might traditionally have lived in social housing, as well as some of those who (in previous eras) would have acquired their own home but are today renting for longer periods. The trend is therefore towards more people living in less secure types of housing.

Other forms of household tenure have remained relatively static. National policies on housing seek to encourage home ownership and there are also programmes aiming to build new social housing. However, the census data does not yet reflect an impact in Greater Manchester from those policies on patterns of tenure.