

# Census 2021 – Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

January 2023



Essex County Council

Research & Insight  
Chief Executive's Office

# Introduction

This is the fifth in a series of outputs, presenting analysis of data collected through Census 2021. It examines the data published on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2023 for Greater Essex and Essex districts.

Throughout this report, 'Essex' refers to Essex County, and 'Greater Essex' refers to Essex, Southend, and Thurrock.

This census data release covers sexual orientations and gender identity. All data released is univariate – we are unable to look at combinations (e.g. gender identity by age) using this data.

Other univariate data will be released over winter 2022. Data planned for the winter release includes information on ethnicity, armed forces veterans, education, sexuality, housing, health, and employment.

ECC's Research and Citizen Insight Team is leading work to prepare authoritative analysis and briefing on Census data as it is released. We will work collaboratively with analysts & researchers from across Essex partners in preparing and delivering these products.

If you would like to be involved in this work, or if you want to be kept up to date with any future census products, please contact Alastair Gordon ([Alastair.Gordon@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Alastair.Gordon@essex.gov.uk)), Chris Holmes ([Chris.Holmes@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.Holmes@essex.gov.uk)), or Sean Maguire ([Sean.Maguire@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Sean.Maguire@essex.gov.uk)).

# Interpretation note

This is the first census which collected data on gender and sexual identity. Compared to other questions on the census, this topic has a relatively high proportion of 'not answered' responses – where the person has not provided any information on the topic.

Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, this 'missing data' will not be missing at random. Certain groups of the population, or people living in certain situations, may feel unable or unwilling to answer these questions.

The census is the most accurate source of population data available. The missing data mentioned above may affect estimates from this data – any figures in this report should be interpreted along with local knowledge of your areas and communities.

7.5% of England residents aged 16 and over didn't respond to the sexuality question, and 6.0% didn't respond to the gender identity question. Residents aged 0-15 were not asked any questions on sexual orientation or gender identity.

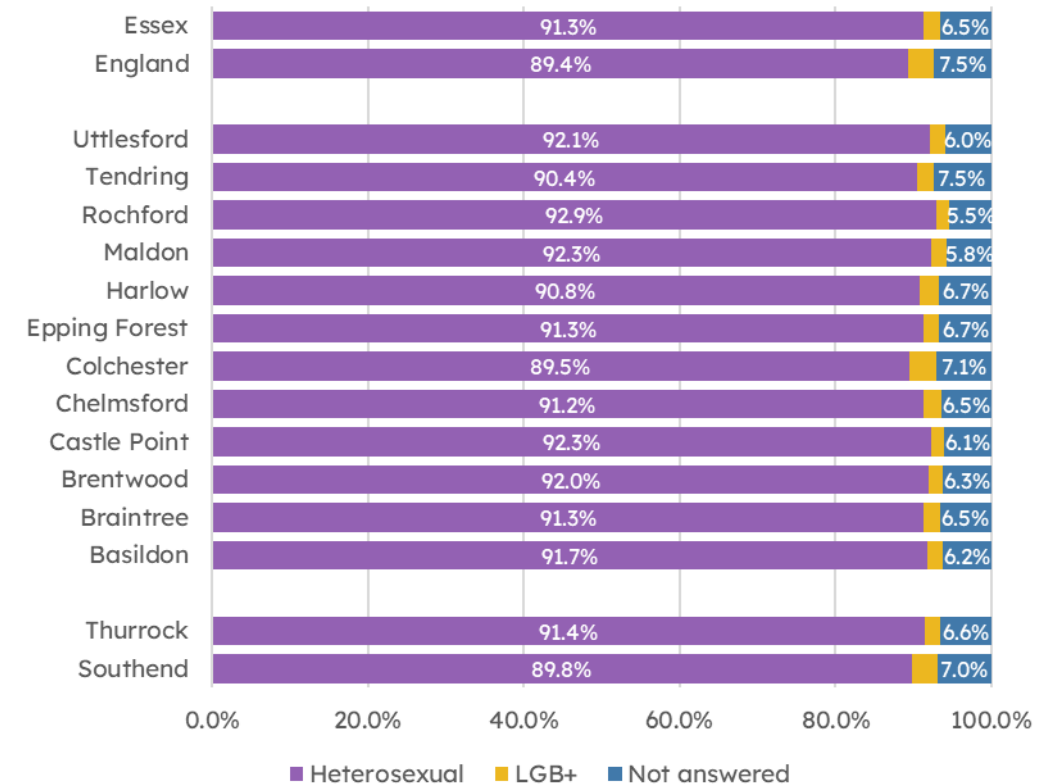
# Sexuality



# Sexual orientation

- 99k Greater Essex residents (6.6%) did not answer this question. This is lower than the 7.5% non-response in England. The areas with the highest non-responses are Tendring (7.5%) and Colchester (7.1%)
- 2.5% of Greater Essex residents identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Other Sexualities (LGB+), compared to 3.4% in England
- Aside from Colchester, every area in Greater Essex has a lower proportion of the population identifying as LGB+ compared to England

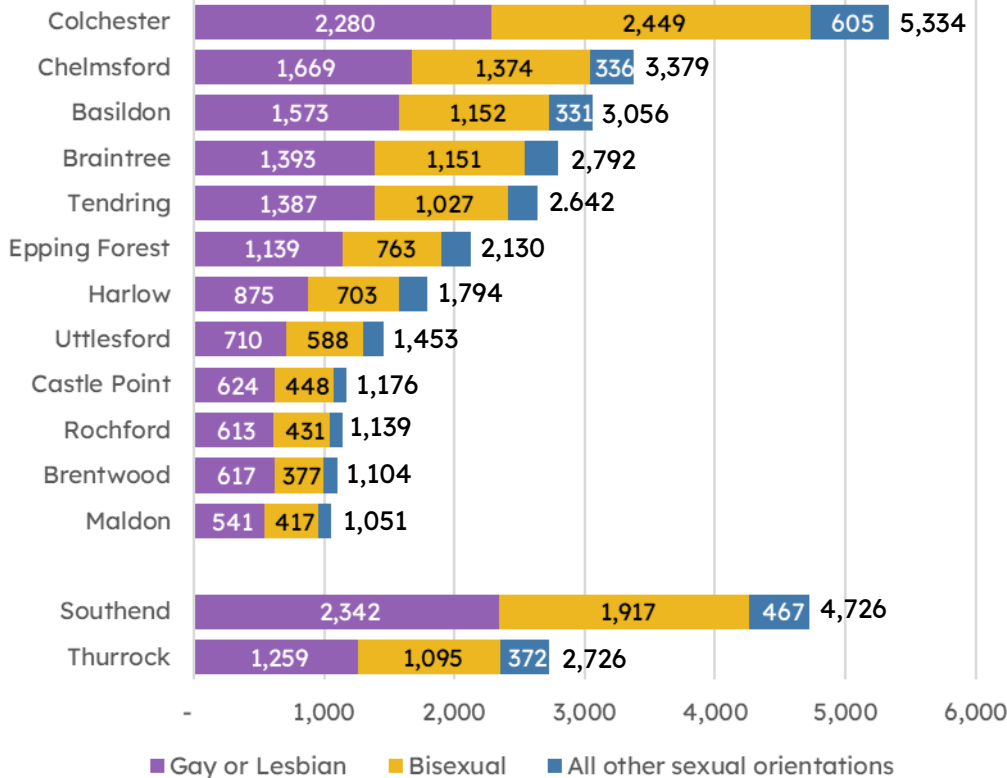
Sexual orientation  
Census 2021



# Sexual orientation

- There are 34.5k LGB+ residents in Greater Essex. 27k live in Essex
- Colchester has the highest number of LGB+ residents (5.3k), followed by Southend (4.7k), and Chelmsford (3.4k)
- Colchester is the only area in Greater Essex where the number of bisexual residents is greater than the number of Gay or Lesbian residents
- There is a total of 3.6k Greater Essex residents who selected the 'All other sexual orientations' option. This group includes Asexual, Queer, and Pansexual

Number of LGB+ residents  
Census 2021



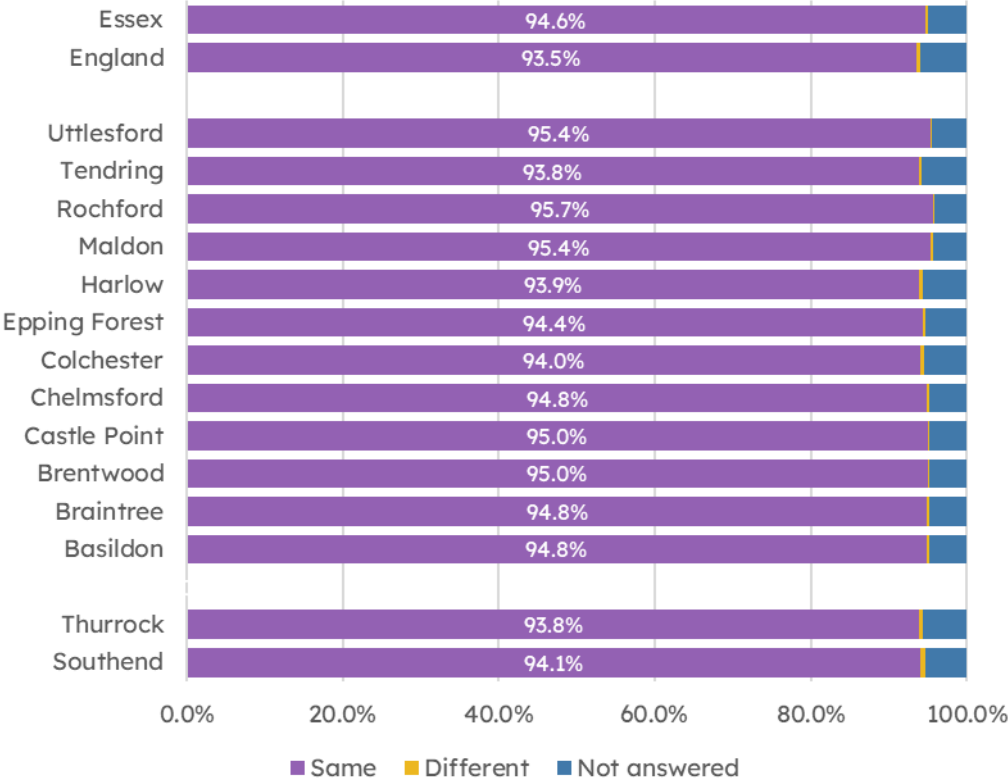
# Gender identity



# Gender identity

- 77k Greater Essex residents (5.1%) did not answer this question. This is lower than the 6.0% non-response in England. The areas with the highest non-responses are Tendring (5.9%) and Colchester (5.5%)
- The chart shows the current gender identity of all residents aged 16+, compared to the sex that they were assigned at birth
- 0.4% of Greater Essex residents identify as a different gender to the one assigned at birth. This is slightly lower than the England figure (0.6%)
- The areas with the highest proportion of residents identifying as a different gender to what they were assigned at birth are Harlow (0.6%), Thurrock (0.5%), and Southend (0.5%)

Gender identity - compared to at birth  
Census 2021

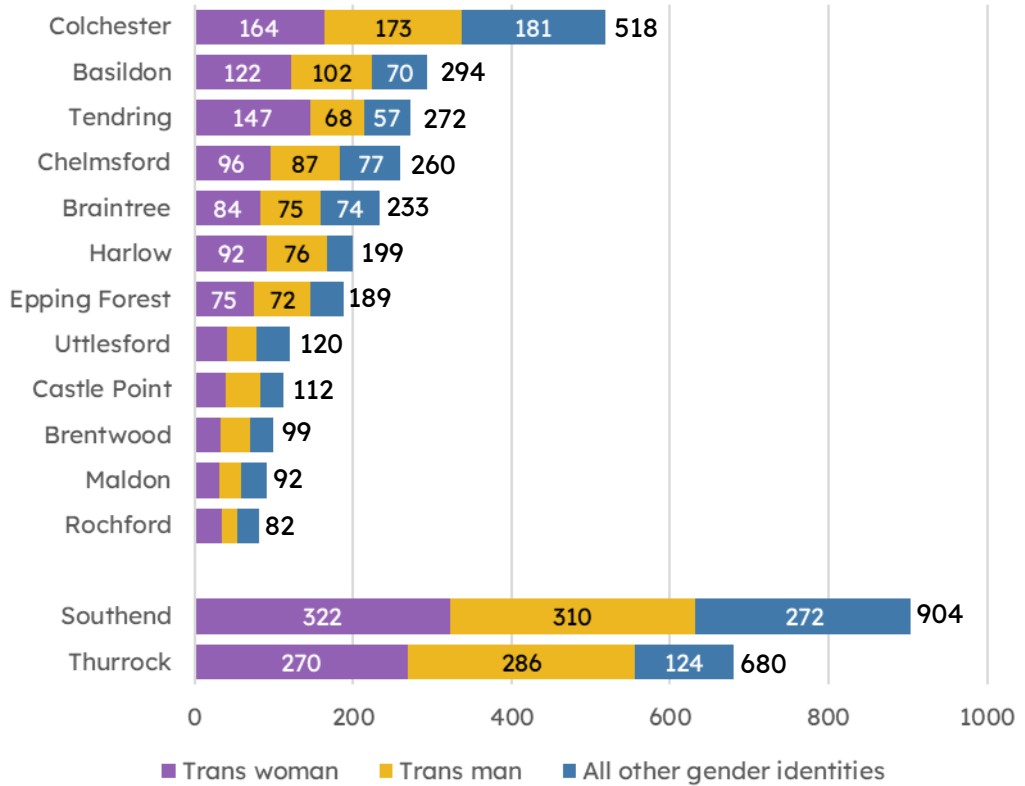




# Gender identity

- There are 4k residents with a different gender identity to what was assigned at birth in Greater Essex, 2.4k live in Essex
- Southend has the highest number of residents with a gender identity different to the one assigned at birth (904), followed by Thurrock (680), and Colchester (518)
- There is a total of 1.1k residents who selected the 'All other gender identities' option. This group includes non-binary, and people with a different but unspecified gender identity compared to the one assigned at birth

Number of residents with different gender identity to what was assigned at birth  
Census 2021



Responses to 'Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?'