

2. Social and Economic Need

The 2001 Census showed that Brereton and Ravenhill had a population of 3,171 males and 3,353 females, totalling 6,524. Of this number, 21.5 per cent were under 16 years of age (slightly higher than the national average), whilst 41.1 per cent were between 30 and 59 years old.

The total number of dwellings was 2,645, giving an average household size of 2.5 residents. Over half the dwellings (57 per cent) were semi-detached, whilst a further 21 per cent were terraced and 17.5 per cent detached houses. These account for almost all the residential properties in the Parish. Of the 2,645 dwellings, 71.7 per cent were owner-occupied, below the Staffordshire average (76.1 per cent), but above the regional (68.9 per cent) and national (68.1 per cent) averages.

The Census showed that the Parish had 11.6 per cent of the population experiencing poor health, which was higher than the district, county, regional and national averages. Not surprisingly, the number of people providing unpaid care was also higher than the same averages.

The number of economically active people in Brereton and Ravenhill (65.6 per cent) was lower than the average for all other tiers. Most of these inhabitants were in full-time employment (64.5 per cent), which was higher than all other averages. Of the economically active residents, 4.5 per cent were unemployed, compared to 4 per cent for Staffordshire but 5.7 per cent for the West Midlands. There were 701 retired residents.

The manufacturing and wholesale/retail sectors accommodated over 40 per cent of the employees. Over 25 per cent were occupied in professional, managerial or senior positions with a further 17.6 per cent in skilled trades and another 17.3 per cent as process, plant and machine operatives. There appears to be a lower-than-average number of self-employed people living in the Parish.

Brereton and Ravenhill have a much higher than average number of residents with no qualifications (40.3 per cent). A further 36.8 per cent had qualifications limited to Level 1 or 2 standards (i.e. foundation or intermediate qualification).

In 2004, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published a revision of the English Indices of Deprivation. This is based on a range of deprivation indicators (income, employment, health and disability, education and skills, etc), which are applied to Lower Super Output Areas (SOAs) with populations of 1,000 to 3,000 residents. There are four SOAs in Brereton and Ravenhill. One of these² generally between Redbrook Lane and Newman Grove is ranked within the 25 per cent most deprived areas in England. The remaining three SOAs are not ranked within the most deprived quartile, although most of the Parish still suffers from education, skills and training deprivation.

Rugeley Job Centre has recently closed, and local job-seekers and other clients now have to access the support services in Cannock, Lichfield and Staffordshire of even further away, for example in Hanley.



Courtesy of St Michael's Church.

