

2011 Census Language Profile

Key Figures

The results of the 2011 Census show that of the 241,675 Royal Borough residents aged 3+, the following characteristics apply:

- The most common spoken language is English with 83.1% of residents stating it was their main language (200,919 people);
- The wards with the highest rate of residents who stated English as their main language were Eltham North (93.7%), Coldharbour & New Eltham (91.7%) and Eltham South (90.8%);
- The wards with the lowest rate of residents who stated English as their main language were Plumstead (72%), Glyndon (73.8%) and Woolwich Common (75.1%);
- After English, the most common spoken language across the Royal Borough is Nepalese, with 5,058 speakers (2.1%). This also accounts for the highest number across all London boroughs;
- The Plumstead ward has the largest number of South Asian language speakers (2,769 residents), of which 1,627 are Nepalese speakers (58.8%);
- Other Indo-Chinese languages spoken across the Royal Borough are Chinese (1,773), Panjabi (1,714), Tamil (1,110), Gujarati (1,052), Vietnamese (917), Urdu (847) and Bengali (792). In total, these languages are spoken by 3.4% of Royal Borough residents;
- Of the Western European languages, 2,151 residents (0.89%) speak French, whilst 1,277 (0.53%) and 1,090 (0.45%) residents speak Spanish and Portuguese respectively;
- Polish (2,232), Lithuanian (1,882), Russian (895) and Romanian (839) speakers account for 5,848 residents who speak an Eastern European language – accounting for 2.4% of Royal Borough residents;
- 5,482 residents across the Royal Borough primarily speak an African language – the most common of which is Somali (1,476), accounting for over one-quarter (26.9%) of African language speakers;
- The Royal Borough has the largest number of Igbo¹ speakers (563 people), and the second largest number of Yoruba² speakers (1,380 people) across all London boroughs;

¹ Igbo is the principal native language of the Igbo people, an ethnic group of south-eastern Nigeria

² Yoruba is a Niger-Congo language, spoken across West Africa, principally in Nigeria and Benin

- With regards to other African languages, the Royal Borough also has the 3rd largest Shona³ speaking population (192 people), the 4th highest speakers of Any Other Nigerian language (233 people), the 5th highest number of Krio⁴ speakers (43 people), the 6th highest number of Luganda⁵ speakers (135 people) and the 7th highest number of Afrikaans⁶ speakers (162 people) across all London boroughs; and
- 111 residents primarily communicate using British sign language. As a result, the Royal Borough has the 9th largest signing population across all 33 London boroughs

Table 1: The 20 Most Spoken Languages within the Royal Borough

Rank	Language	Count	Rate
1	English	200,919	83.1%
2	South Asian Language: Nepalese	5,058	2.1%
3	Other European Language (EU): Polish	2,232	0.9%
4	French	2,151	0.9%
5	Other European Language (EU): Lithuanian	1,882	0.8%
6	East Asian Language: All other Chinese	1,773	0.7%
7	South Asian Language: Panjabi	1,714	0.7%
8	African Language: Somali	1,476	0.6%
9	Turkish	1,408	0.6%
10	African Language: Yoruba	1,380	0.6%
11	Spanish	1,277	0.5%
12	South Asian Language: Tamil	1,110	0.5%
13	Portuguese	1,090	0.5%
14	South Asian Language: Gujarati	1,052	0.4%
15	East Asian Language: Vietnamese	917	0.4%
16	Russian	895	0.4%
17	South Asian Language: Urdu	847	0.4%
18	Other European Language (EU): Romanian	839	0.4%
19	Other European Language (EU): Italian	815	0.3%
20	South Asian Language: Bengali (with Sylheti and Chatgaya)	792	0.3%
Total (of residents aged 3+)		229,627	95.0%

Source: ONS Census 2011 Table QS204EW Main Language (Detailed)

³ Shona is a language spoken in Zimbabwe, southern Zambia, Botswana and Mozambique

⁴ Krio is spoken throughout the West African nation of Sierra Leone

⁵ Luganda is a Niger-Congo language spoken mainly in Southern Uganda

⁶ Afrikaans is a language descended from Dutch and spoken mainly in South Africa and Namibia

Table 2: The Number and Percentage of English-speaking Royal Borough Residents (aged 3+) by Ward

Ward	Residents aged 3+	English as Main Spoken Language	Rate
Abbey Wood	14,773	12,543	84.9%
Blackheath Westcombe	12,363	11,171	90.4%
Charlton	13,588	11,120	81.8%
Coldharbour and New Eltham	12,602	11,558	91.7%
Eltham North	12,074	11,318	93.7%
Eltham South	12,066	10,955	90.8%
Eltham West	9,976	8,767	87.9%
Glyndon	17,111	12,625	73.8%
Greenwich West	15,729	12,935	82.2%
Kidbrooke with Hornfair	13,629	11,573	84.9%
Middle Park and Sutcliffe	12,897	11,431	88.6%
Peninsula	13,382	10,903	81.5%
Plumstead	15,891	11,442	72.0%
Shooters Hill	12,884	11,468	89.0%
Thamesmead Moorings	18,346	14,867	81.0%
Woolwich Common	16,391	12,316	75.1%
Woolwich Riverside	17,973	13,927	77.5%
Royal Greenwich	241,675	200,919	83.1%
London	7,809,942	6,083,420	77.9%

Source: ONS Census 2011 Table QS204EW Main Language (Detailed)

Table 3: Regional Languages Spoken by Royal Borough Residents (aged 3+) by Ward (Count)

Ward	UK	European (non-UK)	South & East Asian	Western & Central Asian	African	Other	Total
Abbey Wood	12,547	716	771	168	535	36	14,773
Blackheath Westcombe	11,178	735	239	121	84	6	12,363
Charlton	11,123	951	1,088	139	273	14	13,588
Coldharbour and New Eltham	11,561	475	331	152	70	13	12,602
Eltham North	11,323	410	234	55	35	17	12,074
Eltham South	10,957	496	386	138	80	9	12,066
Eltham West	8,770	644	304	98	154	6	9,976
Glyndon	12,630	1,295	2,293	270	596	27	17,111
Greenwich West	12,945	1,456	799	282	226	21	15,729
Kidbrooke with Hornfair	11,581	882	733	216	187	30	13,629
Middle Park and Sutcliffe	11,438	720	391	243	91	14	12,897
Peninsula	10,908	1,258	927	134	128	27	13,382
Plumstead	11,450	908	2,913	170	415	35	15,891
Shooters Hill	11,474	510	572	154	157	17	12,884
Thamesmead Moorings	14,873	1,707	697	202	828	39	18,346
Woolwich Common	12,318	1,107	1,814	229	868	55	16,391
Woolwich Riverside	13,930	1,541	1,401	313	755	33	17,973
Royal Greenwich	201,006	15,811	15,893	3,084	5,482	399	241,675
London	6,085,896	718,802	635,824	224,090	132,216	13,114	7,809,942

Source: ONS Census 2011 Table QS204EW Main Language (Detailed)

Table 4: Regional Languages Spoken by Royal Borough Residents (aged 3+) by Ward (Rate)

Area	UK	European (non-UK)	South & East Asian	Western & Central Asian	African	Other	Total
Abbey Wood	84.9%	4.8%	5.2%	1.1%	3.6%	0.2%	100%
Blackheath Westcombe	90.4%	5.9%	1.9%	1.0%	0.7%	0.0%	100%
Charlton	81.9%	7.0%	8.0%	1.0%	2.0%	0.1%	100%
Coldharbour and New Eltham	91.7%	3.8%	2.6%	1.2%	0.6%	0.1%	100%
Eltham North	93.8%	3.4%	1.9%	0.5%	0.3%	0.1%	100%
Eltham South	90.8%	4.1%	3.2%	1.1%	0.7%	0.1%	100%
Eltham West	87.9%	6.5%	3.0%	1.0%	1.5%	0.1%	100%
Glyndon	73.8%	7.6%	13.4%	1.6%	3.5%	0.2%	100%
Greenwich West	82.3%	9.3%	5.1%	1.8%	1.4%	0.1%	100%
Kidbrooke with Hornfair	85.0%	6.5%	5.4%	1.6%	1.4%	0.2%	100%
Middle Park and Sutcliffe	88.7%	5.6%	3.0%	1.9%	0.7%	0.1%	100%
Peninsula	81.5%	9.4%	6.9%	1.0%	1.0%	0.2%	100%
Plumstead	72.1%	5.7%	18.3%	1.1%	2.6%	0.2%	100%
Shooters Hill	89.1%	4.0%	4.4%	1.2%	1.2%	0.1%	100%
Thamesmead Moorings	81.1%	9.3%	3.8%	1.1%	4.5%	0.2%	100%
Woolwich Common	75.2%	6.8%	11.1%	1.4%	5.3%	0.3%	100%
Woolwich Riverside	77.5%	8.6%	7.8%	1.7%	4.2%	0.2%	100%
Royal Greenwich	83.2%	6.5%	6.6%	1.3%	2.3%	0.2%	100%
London	77.9%	9.2%	8.1%	2.9%	1.7%	0.2%	100%

Source: ONS Census 2011 Table QS204EW Main Language (Detailed)