

Make it Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire

Sector Profile **Business Services**

January 2015



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Sources: ONS, Office for National Statistics
BRES 2013 (Business Register & Employment Survey);
Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2013; Claimant Count
2014; Sector wage rates, Totaljobs.com

Executive Summary

▶ **With its service sector skills base, large population catchment area and cost effectiveness, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is an outstanding location for Business Services operations.**

- **A significant pool of labour.** With a population of over 1 million people and a population catchment of 2.7 million within a 45 minute drive time, companies based in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire can access a considerable pool of labour.
- **An experienced pool of labour for Business Services operations.** With 41,200 employees in sales and customer service operations and over 46,000 within administrative occupations; this enables Business Services operations to effectively recruit employees with the relevant skills base.
- **A sustainable pool of labour.** The significant population catchment area of 2.7 million people within a 45 minute drive time; combined with over 87,000 of employees in customer service and administrative occupations means that companies can benefit from a reliable and sustainable employee base.
- **A range of Business Services activities, reflecting the broad skills base in the area.** Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a growing business services sector employing over 28,500 people. This represents a range of activities from back-office administration operations such as Shared Service Centres as well as customer service centres and IT outsourcing.
- **An existing base of Shared Service Centres.** JCB and Alstom UK are amongst the base of companies providing centralised services in functions such as: HR, IT, Sourcing and Logistics, Communications, Finance and Legal.
- **A Customer Service culture.** Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire's customer service culture is demonstrated by the large number of customer service operations in the area, including Michelin, Vodaphone, Bet365, Aegas and Odeon.
- **A growing IT support and outsourcing sector.** Over 4,200 employees work in computer programming and related activity. This skills base has already attracted a number of computer facilities management and IT outsourcing services.
- **A cost effective location.** Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is a cost effective location, with wage rates more competitive than the national average, representing a potential cost saving of up to 15%.
- **A significant cost saving in office rentals, representing a saving of over 60% compared to other cities.** The average office rental in Stoke-on-Trent is over 60% less per sq. ft than in other cities such as Manchester and 57% less than Birmingham.
- **A well connected location providing ease of access to a large client base.** Almost every UK city could be visited for a day's business by rail with a return trip the same day and London with a journey time of 1 hour and 15 minutes away. Birmingham and Manchester Airports are within an hour's drive of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Introduction

▶ **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has strengths in the business services sector but is also notably strong in advanced manufacturing.**

- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is centrally located in the UK. It is within 17 miles of Birmingham and 45 miles from Manchester. London is just 1 hour and 15 minutes away by train.
- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire's central position and excellent transport infrastructure accounts for its large population catchment area. There are 2.76 million people within a 45 minute drive time, a significantly larger number than the catchments for Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Bristol or Newcastle.
- The area is notably strong in manufacturing, employing over 56,100 people, representing 13.2% of the population, compared to the national average of 8.5% and 12.2% for the West Midlands as a whole.
- Global manufacturers based in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire include: Siemens, GE Power, Pirelli and Sumitomo Electric Wiring Systems. They represent manufacturing activity ranging from R&D in power converter technologies to automotive component manufacturers.
- In addition to advanced manufacturing operations, ceramics is still a key sector in the area, representing 3% of the workforce in Stoke-on-Trent. As well as high end manufacturing, the ceramic skills base has attracted a growing number of specialised companies including Biocomposites and Mantec Technical Ceramics.
- The strength of the manufacturing sector combined with the area's outstanding motorway connections has led to Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire becoming a national hub for logistics and distribution, which has been further augmented through the growth of retail and, in particular, e-commerce national distribution centres. Around 23,800 people are employed in transport and storage.
- A number of international companies also have their global and UK headquartered operations located in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. Notably this includes JCB, Michelin, Portmeirion and Alstom Grid.
- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a growing Business Services sector, particularly in the area of computer programming, consultancy and related services where over 4,000 are employed. There are also a number of customer service centre operations including Vodafone, E.on, and Punch Taverns, as well as multilingual customer service operations such as Bet365.
- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has been successful in securing both new investment and re-investment. This includes recent new investment by Amazon and Jaguar Land Rover and existing investors such as JCB and GE have also re-invested in the area.

Population & Profile

▶ With a population of over a million and a population catchment of almost 3 million within a 45 minute drive time, employers benefit from access to a large pool of labour.

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a population of over 1 million and a total population of 2.76 million people within a 45 minute drive time, providing employers with a large and sustainable pool of labour.

- The area's central UK geographic position and its excellent transport infrastructure means that Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a large catchment area. Over 2.7 million people live within a 45 minutes drive time of Stoke-on-Trent. This is a larger population catchment than for other cities including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Bristol and Newcastle.
- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has an economic activity rate that is slightly higher than that of the West Midlands as a whole.
- Unemployment levels (as measured by Claimant Count) vary across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. On average, Claimant Count levels in the area as a whole are lower than the average for both the UK and the West Midlands. The local unemployment level means that there is a sustainable pool of labour available to new companies locating to the area.

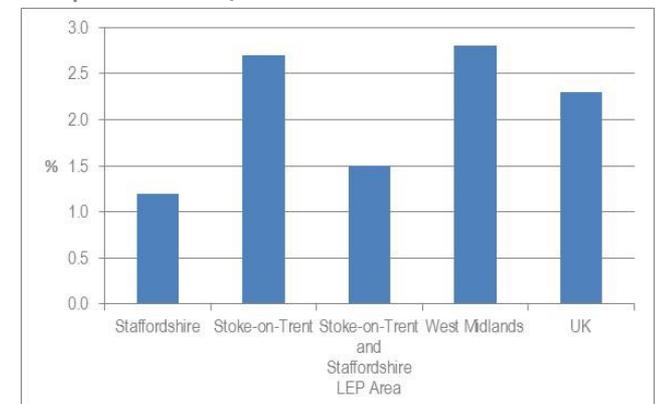
Total & Working Age Population, 2013

	Total
Total Population	1,107,200
Working Age Population	696,800
Working age population (16-64)	62.9% (UK 63.8%)

Economic Activity Rate, 2013

	Economic Activity Rate %
Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire	75.6
West Midlands	75.1
UK	77.3

Jobseekers Allowance, Claimant Count, September 2014



Population & Profile

▶ With its large pool of labour with Business Services skills and experience, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire provides an ideal location for a broad range of activities in this sector.

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is an ideal location for Business Services operations. There are 41,200 employees in sales and customer service operations and over 46,000 in administrative occupations. This enables Business Services operations to effectively recruit employees with the relevant skills base.

- As well as the high availability of employees with administrative and customer services experience, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire also has almost 55,000 employees in management occupations, a higher proportion than for the West Midlands and Great Britain as a whole.

Occupation of Working Age Population, 2013

	Total	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire %	West Midlands %	UK %
Managers and senior officials	54,700	10.8	10.0	10.1
Professional occupations	79,000	15.5	17.6	19.7
Associate professional and technical occupations	68,600	13.5	12.0	13.9
Administrative and secretarial occupations	46,100	9.1	10.7	10.8
Skilled trades occupations	64,900	12.8	11.4	10.7
Personal service occupations	54,700	10.8	9.6	9.1
Sales and customer services occupations	41,200	8.1	8.1	7.9
Process, plant and machine operations	39,700	7.8	8.0	6.3
Elementary occupations	58,200	11.4	11.9	10.7

Business Services

▶ **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a broad base of Business Services related operations, representing major companies including: RBS, Ageas, Capita, JCB, Michelin and Vodaphone.**

With 28,500 people employed in wide range of business services activities, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire provides a strong base for a financial and business services operation.

- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a growing business services sector employing nearly 29,000 people. This ranges from back-office administration, customer service centres and IT support.
- The area has an established financial services sector. RBS has the European Operations Centre of its Global Banking and Markets Division based in Newcastle-under-Lyme. There are also a number of outsourced financial services operations. This includes the Co-operative Bank's mortgage processing centre (managed by Capita Plc) which employs over 300 staff locally and Ageas Insurance Solutions. The latter is a personal line insurance intermediary provides outsourced services to high profile brands such as John Lewis and Tesco Bank as well as an outsourced service to brokers.
- Shared Service Centres of global companies are well represented and include JCB and Alstom Grid. Shared Service Centre operations are complemented by a strong base of Customer Service Centres, including multi-lingual and 24/7 operations.
- With almost 4,200 employees in computer programming and related activities, Stoke-On-Trent and Staffordshire also makes an ideal location for IT outsourcing operations.

Employment, Sub-Sectors (by SIC Codes) Representing Business Services, 2013

Business Services Related Sectors	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire No	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire %	Great Britain %	West Midlands %
62 : Computer programming, consultancy & related activities	4,200	1.0	2.0	1.4
63 : Information service activities	400	0.1	0.2	0.2
64 : Financial service activities, except insurance and pension funding	4,700	1.1	1.9	1.5
65 : Insurance, reinsurance and pension funding, except compulsory social security	200	0.0	0.4	0.4
66 : Activities auxiliary to financial services and insurance activities	3,400	0.8	1.5	0.9
69 : Legal and accounting activities	3,900	0.9	2.1	1.4
70 : Activities of head offices; management consultancy activities	6,700	1.6	2.3	2.0
82 : Office administrative, office support and other business support activities	5,000	1.2	1.4	1.4
Column Total	28,500	6.7	11.8	9.3

Note: numbers are rounded to the nearest 100. Percentages based on un-rounded numbers.

Business Services

▶ **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a strong track record in Business Administration Services and is the base of a number of Shared Service Centres including Alstom Group UK and JCB.**

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has over 32,000 people employed in business administration and support services, representing 7.7% of all employees. This provides a large and experienced pool of labour for back-office operations such as Shared Service Centres across a range of functions from HR to finance.

- In the broader industrial grouping of Business Administration and Support Services, Stoke and Staffordshire employs 32,800 people, representing 7.7% of the population.
- The area has a broad range of back-office administration operations, ranging from Shared Service Centres providing HR and Finance support, to the settlement and post-settlement support for global investment banking operations.
- The number of global and national headquartered operations of multinationals in the area has led to the development of a growing base of Shared Service Centres. Amongst these are Alstom Grid, Michelin and JCB. Alstom Group UK has its Group Shared Service Centre in Staffordshire. This incorporates a number of different functions including: HR, IT, Finance and Environment & Health and Safety.
- JCB which employs over 5,000 staff in the area and is headquartered in Rocester, Staffordshire, incorporates a Shared Service Centre operation which provides Group Administration, Finance and other support services. Michelin also provides some Shared Service Centre functions in addition to its Customer Service Centre for UK and Ireland.
- The European Operation Centre of the RBS Global Banking and Markets division in Newcastle-Under-Lyme provides back office support for the processing of trades across RBS's multiple products. This includes trade validation, confirmation, settlement and post-settlement support.

Employees in Business Administration, Broad Industrial Grouping, 2013

Location	14 : Business administration & support services
Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire	32,800
Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire	7.7%
West Midlands	8.1%
Great Britain	8.4%

IT Services

- The presence of a strong employee base with computer programming and related activity, totalling 4,200 has also attracted a number of computer facilities management and outsourcing services. One such company is Synectics Solutions which manages database and data centre services for companies including Co-operative Group (Food) and Lexus Financial Services and Toyota Financial services. Other IT solutions providers and IT outsourcers include Quiss Technology PLC headquartered in Tamworth and Contact headquartered in Stoke-on-Trent who provide IT and Telecoms Solutions.

Business Services – Case Study

▶ **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is an excellent location for Business Services operations, providing a flexible pool of labour with a broad skills base; ranging from multilingual to finance and administration.**



LA International is a global company which operates across 23 countries and is headquartered in Stoke-on-Trent where it employs over 125 staff across eight specialist operating divisions. The company specialises in recruiting expert contract and permanent IT and engineering staff, ranging from IT Programmers to Project Engineers. Clients include: IBM, Siemens, American Express, Hewlett Packard, Nokia, Eurocontrol, Belgacom, Lockheed Martin, Fujitsu and Unisys.

The diverse range of recruitment sourcing solutions provided by LA International includes cyber security, cloud computing, administering high levels of security clearance as well as outsourced UK and International payroll solutions serviced from their Stoke-on-Trent HQ. The company employs a significant locally sourced administration and finance processing staff combined with multi-lingual skills, and is ranked among the top UK private companies with the fastest growing international sales in European, Asian and North American markets.

“Stoke-on-Trent is an excellent base from which to serve national and international markets. Our teams support a growing number of international clients in a number of countries including: Germany, Scandinavia, the Netherlands and as far afield as Asia Pacific regions. Being consistently amongst the best in our professional game, with an enviable reputation for project delivery, this is wholly due to recruiting and developing in-house the high quality staff we need for our business”.

Paul Lukic, Chairman and CEO, LA International

Customer Service Operations

▶ **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a strong base of customer service centres including: Michelin, Vodaphone, Odeon and Phones4U.**

With more than 41,000 people employed in sales and customer services occupations in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, new operations are able to recruit efficiently and effectively from an experienced pool of labour.

- The large pool of labour with experience in sales and customer service operations means that new companies to the area can easily recruit from an experienced labour pool. The local student population of 31,000 also provides a flexible pool of labour for shift patterns and peak periods.
- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a strong track record in customer service operations, with a base for household names including Vodaphone, Odeon and Michelin.
- Companies operating pan-European and global operations can also easily recruit multi-lingual customer service advisors. A number of customer support centre operations in the area provide multi-lingual services. This includes Bet365 and LA International. Bet365 supports customers in 200 countries from Stoke-on-Trent. The company has recently moved to a purpose built HQ at Festival Park, where the company now employs over 2,340 staff.

Location	Sales and Customer Services Occupations
Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Total Number	41,200
Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire	8.1
West Midlands	8.1
Great Britain	7.9

Selected Customer Service Centres

Palletforce UK	Vodaphone
Merlin Group	Bet365
JCB	Odeon Bookit
Michelin	Punch Taverns
Ageas	LA International

Vodaphone

Vodaphone is one of the world's leading mobile telecommunications companies, with a customer base of more than 400million operating in more than 30 countries.

The company has its state-of-the-art contact centre located in Etruria Valley, Stoke-on-Trent. The centre employs 1,200 staff, with roles ranging from credit controllers to inbound and outbound customer retention advisors as well as customer support roles. The centre handles 40,000 calls per week.

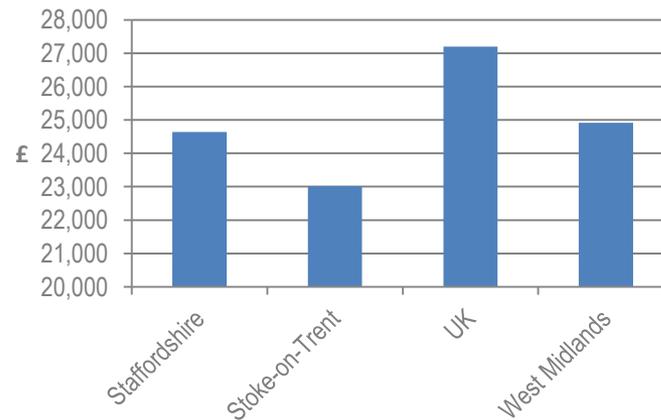
Wage Rates

▶ Localities within Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire have average wage rates that are significantly lower than the UK and regional average.

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is a cost effective location, with wage rates more competitive than the national average and the West Midlands as a whole, representing a potential cost saving of up to 15% on salaries.

- Wage rates in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire are significantly lower than the UK median average and overall represent a saving from 9% on salaries (up to 15% in Stoke-on-Trent). The availability of a large pool of labour with Business Services skills helps to keep wage rates sustainable, making the area a competitive location for businesses.

Median Annual Gross Earnings by Local Authority, UK and West Midlands, 2014



Business Services, Selected Salaries, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, 2014

Selected Roles	Salary
Credit Controller	£16,000 - £20,000
IT Support Manager	£35,000 - £40,000
Customer Service Advisor	£13,000 - £17,000
Bi-lingual German / English Customer Services Advisor	£17,000

Education & Skills

▶ **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a working age population of 171,900 educated to a minimum of degree level (NVQ level 4) and a total student population of over 305,000 in the one hour drive-time catchment area.**

Businesses can attract staff with a range of qualifications and skills with over a quarter of the working population educated to at least degree level.

- Over 170,000 people of working age are educated to degree level in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. The two universities of Keele and Staffordshire provide a local student population of over 31,000.
- The proximity of other universities in the catchment area significantly adds to the total student population. Within an hour's drive of Stoke-on-Trent are the universities of: Coventry, Manchester, Salford, Liverpool, Derby, Chester, Manchester Metropolitan, Liverpool John Moores, Birmingham, Birmingham City, Aston and Wolverhampton.

Resident Population of Working Age (16-64) by Highest Level of Qualification Achieved

Max Qualification	Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire No.	Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire%	West Midlands%	UK%
% with NVQ4+ -	171,900	25.7	28.4	35.0
% with NVQ3+	329,500	49.3	49.4	55.6
% with NVQ2+	461,000	68.9	66.9	72.3
% with NVQ1+	542,300	81.1	79.3	84.2
% with other qualifications	45,900	6.9	7.2	6.2
% with no qualifications (NVQ)	80,600	12.1	13.6	9.5

▶ NVQ 1: equivalent to GCSE

▶ NVQ 3: equivalent 2 or more A levels

▶ NVQ 2: equivalent to 1 Advanced level

▶ NVQ 4: equivalent to First degree

Number of Post Graduates/Undergraduates at Universities within 1 hour Drive, 2012

	Full time	Part time	Total
Undergraduates	201,730	35,850	237,580
Post graduates	35,195	32,630	67,825
TOTAL	236,925	68,480	305,405

Education & Skills

▶ With a local student population of more than 31,000 and two Business Schools; this provides a source of new local talent for Business Services Operations.

The local provision of Further Education and Higher Education ensures businesses can access a diverse range of skills within Business Services ranging from finance to IT and customer service

- As well as the large catchment of students within an hour's drive, Keele University and Staffordshire University combined, provide a total yearly average student population of over 31,000. Both Universities have a Business School.
- Keele University's Management School provides a broad base of courses for Business Services operations. This includes Masters courses in Finance and IT; International Business, Human Resource Management and in Accounting & Financial Management. Part-time courses include a PG Certificate in Leadership and Management and an MBA. Undergraduate courses include BA's in Accounting & Finance and in Management.
- Keele University also provides a range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Computing and Mathematics related subjects including a BSc in Information Systems and an MSc in Analytics for Business and Research. The University also delivers BSc Dual Honours in both Information Systems and Computer Science.
- Staffordshire University also has a strong Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Technology. Undergraduate and post graduate degrees include Computer Science, Computer Networks & Security and Software Engineering.
- Staffordshire University provides a range of undergraduate and post graduate qualifications ideal for the recruitment of staff for Business Services operations. This includes subjects in: Accounting & Finance; Business & Management, and Business & Human Resource Management.

Number of Post Graduates/Undergraduates, Staffordshire and Keele Universities, 2012

	Full time	Part time	Total
Undergraduates	17,605	7,525	25,130
Post graduates	2,095	4,030	6,125
TOTAL	19,700	11,555	31,255

- Staffordshire University Business School offers an MBA programme as well as BA in Business Management and professional awards in Leadership & Management.

Further Education

- The local Further Education Colleges including Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke-on-Trent College and Leek College provide a range of courses and training support for customer services operations, ranging from Level 2 to an Advanced Apprenticeship framework in Customer Services and in Business Administration.

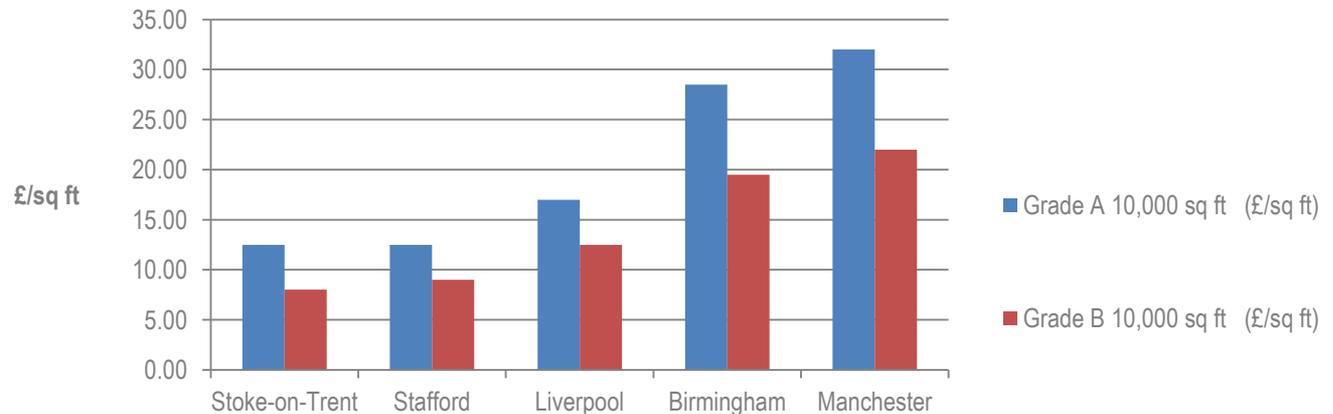
Sites & Premises

▶ **Stoke-on-Trent can offer the most cost effective office rentals compared to other UK cities, representing a cost saving of over 60% compared to other cities including Manchester.**

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a supply of competitively priced office accommodation as well as sites for tailor-made Design and Build schemes. Office rentals are approximately 57% less in Stoke-on-Trent than in Birmingham and 62% less than Manchester.

- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire provides a range of refurbished and new office space with locations ranging from Business Parks to town centre and city centre options.
- The average (mean) office rental per square ft (Grade A and B) is £10.25 per sq. ft. in Stoke-on-Trent and £10.75 per sq. ft. in Staffordshire. The average rental per square foot is considerably less than other in other locations. It is 62% less than in Manchester; 57% less than Birmingham and 30% less than Liverpool.
- There are a number of Business Parks in the area providing a wide range of property options. These include Staffordshire Technology Park, Trentham Lakes, Etruria Valley, Lymedale Park and Beacon Business Park.
- i54 South Staffordshire Business Park is a 91 hectares (226 site adjacent to Junction 2 of the M54. i54 is an Enterprise Zone which means that occupiers can potentially benefit from a number of benefits including a business rate discount worth up to £275,000 over five years as well as support for superfast broadband.
- Keele University Science and Business Park provides high quality business space for biotech, medical, IT and the service industries. Office spaces start with suites of 400sq. ft. as well as significant expansion space for design and build.
- Construction has started on part of Smithfield, a new business district of 1.2 million sq. ft. in Stoke-on-Trent city centre. This includes proposals for 750,000 sq. ft. of Grade A office space, 210,000 sq. ft. of which has already been committed.

Average Grade A and Grade B Office Rentals, Collier International, 2014



Connectivity

▶ With its motorway, rail and air links, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is an excellent location from which to access national and international clients.

The area's outstanding transport infrastructure with its direct motorway access makes most of the UK's cities accessible within a four hour drive time. Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is an ideal location from which to access national and international clients.

Map of the UK showing up to 4 hour drive times from Stoke on Trent



- The area's central position and outstanding motorway infrastructure ensures Business Services operations are within close proximity to clients.
- Proximity to the M6, M6 Toll and M1 provides efficient connections to the national motorway network, making London 2hrs 35 minutes away and Birmingham only 30 minutes away.
- Four airports including Birmingham and Manchester Airport are within an hour's drive of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Direct Flights per Week, Selected Destinations, 2014

Destination	Manchester Airport	Birmingham Airport
Amsterdam	47	52
Frankfurt	28	28
Paris	45	38
Zurich	14	12
New York	21	7
Middle East	54	26

Connectivity cont/...

▶ **With its outstanding motorway links, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is an excellent location from which to access national and international markets.**

- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire's excellent road links means that most of the UK's cities can be reached within a three hour drive. The major motorway arteries in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire include the M6 and M6 Toll. The M1 is accessed from the M42, A42 and A50.
- The Port of Liverpool is an hour away and the South and East Coast Ports can be reached under four hours.
- The railway stations in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire provide fast and frequent services to the UK's cities. Almost every UK city could be visited for a day's business by rail with a return the same day. There are two trains an hour from Stoke-on-Trent to London with a journey time of 1 hour and 30 minutes and three trains an hour from Stafford, with a journey time of 1 hour and fifteen minutes.

Distances from locations in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire to Selected Cities

	Stafford	Stoke-on-Trent
Birmingham	28 miles	45 miles
	42 mins	1hr
Edinburgh	265 miles	250 miles
	4hr 50	4hr 35
Leeds	106 miles	92 miles
	1hr 50	1hr 40
London	142 miles	159 miles
	2hr 50	3hr
Manchester	59 miles	45 miles
	1hr 15	1hr

Superfast Broadband (SFBB)

Superfast Staffordshire, a partnership with BT, is completing the commercial rollout of SFBB to enable 97% of businesses in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire to have access to SFBB by Spring 2016; providing a broadband speed of 24 Mbps.

Journey time by rail from Selected station in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire to Selected Cities

	Stoke-on-Trent	Stafford	Tamworth
Birmingham	47 mins	30 mins	18 mins
Cardiff	3hr 6	2hr 46	2hr 11
Edinburgh	4hr 8	3hr 48	4hr 42
Leeds	1hr 48	2hr 17	1hr 37
London	1hr 30	1hr 15	1hr 19
Manchester	35 mins	1hr 2	1hr 38

Business Support

► The Make it Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Investment Services team provides a tailor-made service for businesses relocating and expanding in the area.

Business Services operations locating to Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire can benefit from tailor-made support to help enable their operations to be established efficiently and effectively.

- Businesses locating to Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire benefit from support to help establish their new operation in the area as well as on-going support. The Make it Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Inward Investment Service team consists of a number of advisors who can support companies with their expansion plans.
- The team can provide a range of support including:
 - The choice of the optimum location
 - Identification of suitable sites and premises
 - Help with site visits and area tours
 - Advice on grants and incentives
 - Support in relation to skills, training, salary levels and recruitment costs
 - Assistance with recruitment and training support
 - Assistance with industry and market research
- Other support networks include the South Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry which both provide support to local businesses. The latter has a membership base of over 1,000 locally based businesses.
- Companies locating to Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire can access The Jobs and Growth Fund Programme which provides gap funding for companies that wish to expand or invest to create sustainable jobs, where this investment would otherwise not happen due to lack of available finance.
- Grant funds can be used for premises expansion, new premises, equipment and infrastructure (i.e. capital expenditure) where this creates substantial new employment or safeguards jobs. The Programme is funded through the Government's Regional Growth Fund (RGF) .
- The Make it Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Team supports companies in working with Staffordshire University and Keele University to access support for graduate recruitment as well as for developing R&D linkages. This includes Knowledge Transfer Partnerships which provides funding for accessing university based skills and expertise. This can be for a range of areas including product development and business process improvements.
- Contact the Inward Investment Service team for free and confidential advice tailored to your specific needs:
 - Tel: 00 44 (0)300 111 8005
 - Email: enquiries@makeitstokestaffs.co.uk

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