

Make it Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire

Sector Profile **Creative and Digital Industries**

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

▶ **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is becoming an important location for Digital and Creative Industries and providing an important source of new talent.**

- **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 skills base for Digital Industries enabling effective recruitment.** Over 4,500 people are employed in this industry in an area that is represented by a diverse range of companies from software developers to Internet Service Providers.
- **A track-record in attracting Digital Industries companies as well as growing home-grown talent.** Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a base of international companies including Instem and Navman Wireless.
- **A burgeoning Creative Industry, particularly in film and video production.** The relocation of a number of BBC divisions to Manchester, only an hour's drive away has encouraged the concentration of companies in this industry in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.
- **Local university strengths in Digital and Creative Industries.** Both Staffordshire University and Keele University have a strong course base in this industry, from undergraduate degrees to PhDs. This represents an important source of new local talent and has also led to a number of graduate based businesses in the area.
- **Proximity to other universities, further increasing the new talent pool.** The area's proximity to Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool, all with universities with courses in digital and creative industry related subjects ensures that digital companies in the area have a wide access to a talented and skilled employment base.
- **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.
- **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a diverse range of sites and premises suitable for the Creative and Digital industries.** There are a number of Business Park in the area providing a wide range of property options. This includes town centre options, out of town Business Parks and Keele University Science and Business Park which is already the base of number of Digital companies
- **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 a diverse business base.

- 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 catchment for Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Bristol or Newcastle.
- The area is notably strong in manufacturing, employing over 54,500 people, representing 13.2% of the population. Compared to the national average of 8.8% and 12.4% 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.
- As well as advanced manufacturing operations, ceramics is still a key sector in the area, representing 4% 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. Over 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, Bet365, Portmeirion and Alstom Grid UK.
- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a growing Business Services sector, particularly in the area of computer programming which represents 1.4% of the employment compared to 1.3% in Birmingham. 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 Alstom 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.

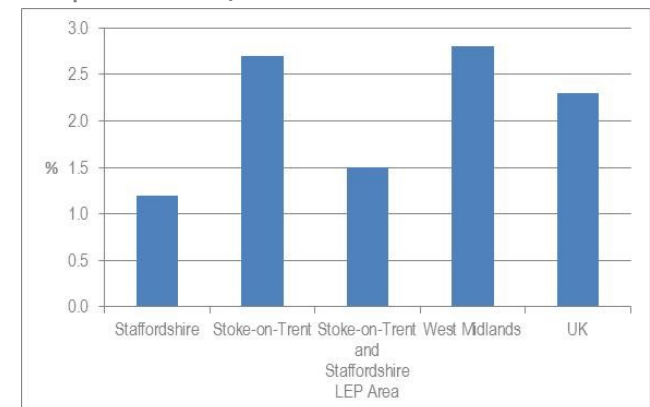
Total & Working Age Population, 2013

	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 in professional and technical occupations, 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 Creative and Digital Industries. There are 67,000 employees in professional occupations and 54,900 in associate and professional and technical occupations. This enables Digital and Creative businesses to effectively recruit employees with the relevant skills base.

- As well as the high availability of employees in professional and technical occupations, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire also has a higher proportion of employees in management occupations than the national or regional average, ensuring that management posts can be easily recruited at a local level.

Occupation of Working Age Population, 2013

	Total	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire %	Great Britain %	West Midlands %
Managers and senior officials	44,500	10.1	9.9	9.9
Professional occupations	67,000	15.2	19.3	17.8
Associate professional and technical occupations	54,900	12.5	13.7	12.2
Administrative and secretarial occupations	46,400	10.5	11.2	11.1
Skilled trades occupations	49,500	11.2	10.9	11.7
Personal service occupations	38,000	8.6	9.1	9.4
Sales and customer services occupations	35,700	8.1	8.2	8.2
Process, plant and machine operations	35,100	8.0	6.5	7.5
Elementary occupations	69,600	15.8	11.0	12.2

Digital Industries

▶ The area has a strong base of companies providing software development in a diverse range of applications including for the energy, medical and entertainment sectors.

With 4,600 people employed in the Digital Industries, this is a sector that is growing in importance in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. It represents a wide range of activity from software development to web hosting.

- Over 4,500 people in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire are employed in the digital industries. Computer programming is particularly strong in Staffordshire, representing 1.6% of all employees. Locally based companies provide services in a wide range of activities; from computer programming including entertainment software and business software to information service activities, which incorporates web portals and hosting.
- The base of software development companies demonstrates the local depth of experience in this area, with specialist software development supporting a number of industries such as medical and healthcare, energy and entertainment amongst others.
- The latter is illustrated by Koko, a company that develops social media games software. Another specialist company in entertainment is Datel which is headquartered in Staffordshire also has offices in the US and Japan. Datel is one of the world's leading developers and manufacturers of videogame enhancement products and hardware peripherals development.
- The increasing importance of the medical technologies and healthcare sector in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has led to a cluster of companies developing software for this sector. This includes Instem, a provider of information solutions for Life Sciences R&D which has a client base of major pharmaceutical companies such as AstraZeneca and GlaxoSmithKline. Others include Static Systems Group which designs and makes the majority of the nurse call systems for the NHS; and has developed a range of Apps influenced solutions which include Cardiac Alarm and VoIP Speech.
- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire's diverse base of digital and media companies has attracted overseas investment. Dutch owned Royal Imtech NV has the principal office of Imtech Water, Waste and Energy based in Staffordshire. The company provides integrated IT solutions and IT performance system for the energy and utilities sector with key clients including National Grid, Alstom, Sellafield, AMEC and United Utilities.

Employment by SIC Codes (Standards Industrial Classification) Representing Digital Industries, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Great Britain and West Midlands, 2013

Sector	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire No.	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire %	Great Britain %	West Midlands %
62 : Computer programming, consultancy and related activities	4,200	1.0	2.0	1.4
63 : Information service activities	400	0.1	0.2	0.2
Column Total	4,600	1.1	2.3	1.6

Digital Industries con't.

▶ **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire's diverse Digital Industries has attracted foreign investment.**

- Other niche software development companies include Navman Wireless, a world leader in providing vehicle tracking via GPS satellite technology and one of the first vehicle tracking companies to use the internet to offer web-based fleet monitoring instead of dial-up mobile phone links.
- Risual is a Tier 1 Microsoft partner based in Staffordshire Technology Park. The company deliver and support global deployments of Microsoft technology and has a wide range of clients include Stobart Group and Paul Smith.
- The digital sector in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire also consists of IT managed services and Internet Service Providers (ISPs). More widely, other IT solutions providers and outsourcers comprises of companies like Quiss Technology PLC, headquartered in Tamworth and Comtact headquartered in Stoke-on-Trent. The latter focuses in converging voice, data and networking technologies.
- Keele University Science and Business Park has attracted a concentration of IT companies. This includes iCritical, a provider of managed services that optimise and secure organisational networks and has a strong focus on network and web security.
- Also based at Keele University Science and Business Park is Internet Central, one of the UK's first Internet Service Providers. The company was established in 1995 and their internet services span connectivity, hosting, online security, and telecoms and VoIP.

Navman Wireless

Navman Wireless is part of Danaher Corporation, a US owned Fortune 200 science and technology company. Navman Wireless has its European HQ based at Keele University Science and Business Park. It has a team of 70 people working specifically on R&D.

Navman Wireless is a recognised a world leader in providing vehicle tracking, messaging and satellite navigation solutions for commercial fleet management and was one of the first companies to move to offer "always on" web-based fleet monitoring rather than dial-up mobile phone based systems.

The company tracks more than 220,000 vehicles worldwide. From its site in Staffordshire, Navman Wireless serves 6,000 UK customers. The company supports 17,000 customers worldwide in 14 countries including China, Italy, the USA, and Australia.

Creative Industries

▶ **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is host to a number of creative industries festivals including 'Stoke Your Fires'**

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a developing Creative Industry, currently employing almost 2,000 people and is growing in importance, including in the area of film, video and TV production.

- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has a growing creative sector which employs almost 2,000 people. The burgeoning film and video production base consists of a diverse number of companies such as award winning film production company Junction 15 Productions and Eclipse Broadcast, a broadcast technical expertise company. Video production and video marketing company, Reels in Motion, serves a wide range of corporate clients including Michelin, Jaguar Land Rover and Johnson & Johnson.
- The Creative Industries is also gaining international recognition through the number of festivals being held in the area. The 'Stoke Your Fires' festival is week long celebration and showcase of film making talent. Other major festivals include the international British Ceramics Biennial which showcases the best of contemporary ceramics. Stoke-on-Trent is an international centre of ceramics tableware design and manufacturing, with iconic brands represented by Wedgwood, Portmeirion, Spode, Minton and Moorcroft amongst others. These historic brands have been augmented by new entrants including Emma Bridgewater.

Selected Creative Industries by SIC Code (Standards Industrial Classification) Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, Great Britain and West Midland, 2013

Sector	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire No	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire %	Great Britain %	West Midlands %
7311 : Advertising agencies	800	0.2	0.4	0.2
7312 : Media representation	170	0.0	0.1	0.0
7410 : Specialised design activities	300	0.1	0.2	0.1
59 : Motion picture, video and television programme production, sound recording and music publishing activities	200	0.1	0.3	0.1
60 : Programming and broadcasting activities	100	0.0	0.1	0.0
90 : Creative, arts and entertainment activities	400	0.1	0.3	0.2

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

Creative Industries con't.

▶ Graduate talent from both Staffordshire University and Keele University as well as proximity to the BBC in Manchester has encouraged the development of the film and video production industry in the area.

- The growth of the film and video production and animation industry in Stoke-Trent and Staffordshire is in part been due to the relocation of a number of BBC divisions to Manchester. The area's close proximity to Manchester and MediaCityUK, which is within an hour's drive, enables companies to more easily service the BBC. London is also easily accessible with a regular one hour and quarter train service.
- Both Staffordshire University and Keele University have a strong course base in film and media. This has boosted the the number of graduate based businesses in the area, such as Junction 15 Productions.

Junction 15 Productions

Junction 15 Productions is a multi-award winning film production company headquartered in Stoke-on-Trent. The company was established by Film, Television & Radio Studies graduates from Staffordshire University. The company has gone from strength to strength and has worked on a combination of productions; from documentaries to 'shorts' and corporate to TV commercials.

The company has won a number of awards for their productions work including an Emmy for work on the Beijing Olympics Games and a BAFTA for their documentary film 'Ben, Diary of a Heroin Addict'. TV broadcast work has included projects for the BBC, ITV, Channel 5, Sky One and Sky Sports. The company also undertaken work with non-UK channels such as NBC.

Selected Film, Video and Animation Companies in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire

Company	Activity
LenZflare	Video production
Junction 15	Film and video production
The Maclagan Men	Integrated media production
McGovern Productions	Video production
Inspired Film and Video	Film & DVD production
Reels in Motion	Video production
Bomark Studios	Video production
Carse and Waterman	Animation
Star and Heroes	Integrated Media production
Grand Independent	Film and video production
Big Red Studio Animation	Animation provider
Grand Independent	Film development & production

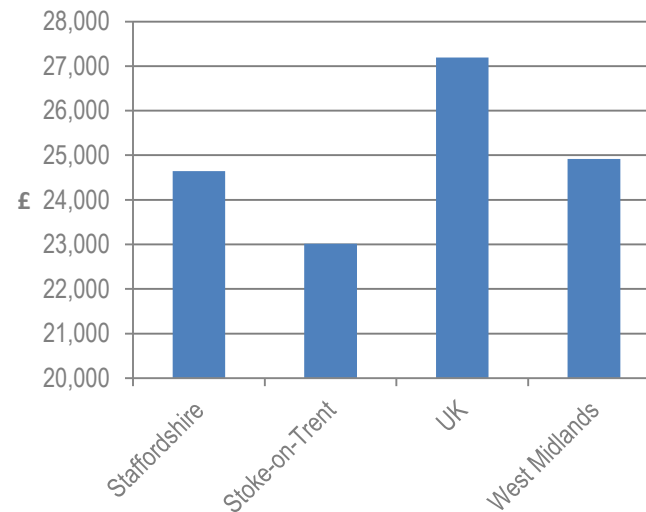
Wage Rates

▶ 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 engineering skills helps to keep wage rates sustainable, making the area a competitive location for companies in the creative and digital sector.

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



Digital and Creative, Selected Salaries, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, 2014

Selected Roles	Salary
Software Developer VB.NET/ASP.NET	£35,000 - £40,000
Software Development Manager	£50,000 - £65,000
Web Designer	£25,000 - £30,000
Digital Marketing Manager	£30,000 - £55,000

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 2: equivalent to 1 Advanced level

▶ NVQ 3: equivalent 2 or more A levels

▶ 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 over 31,000 this provides a source of new local talent for Creative and Digital industry businesses.

The local provision of Further Education and Higher Education in Creative and Digital industries related subjects ensures businesses can access a diversity of graduates, with skills ranging from software development to film and video production.

- Staffordshire University has a strong Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Technology with 3,600 students representing an important source of new local talent for digital businesses. Undergraduate and post graduate degrees include Computer Science, Computing Science and Software Engineering as well as mobile apps development and computer games related degrees.
- In addition, Keele University provides a range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Computing and Mathematics related subjects including BSc in Smart Systems, in Computer Sciences and also in Creative Computing.
- In relation to Creative Industries, the Faculty of Arts, Media and Design within Staffordshire University offers a broad portfolio of courses from undergraduate degrees through to PhDs including a wide choice of subjects from: Broadcast Journalism, Film, Television and Radio Studies through to art and design awards, including 3D Design, CGI and Digital Effects, and Creative Music Technology. The University recently launched a BA (Hons) in Cartoon and Comic Arts.
- The Centre for Media, Arts and Technologies (C-MAT) at Staffordshire University is a research centre that combines expertise in all aspects of digital media in the Faculties of Arts, Media and Design and Computing, Engineering and Technology. It brings together disciplines such as Film, Games, Journalism and Digital Streaming Technology.
- The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Keele University offers a number undergraduate and post graduate course in creative studies including Film Studies, Global Media, Communications and Culture.

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

- As well as the universities of Staffordshire and Keele, further education colleges also provide a range of courses for the Creative and Digital industries, such as South Staffordshire College's Lichfield campus which is significant in art, design and media.
- Newcastle-under-Lyme College has a dedicated campus for its Faculty of Art and Creative Studies. In 2015 it will open a new £5.5m Performing Arts Centre which will be home to a 200-seater theatre, an industry standard music technology suite and two air conditioned dance studios. Students can study a wide range of performing arts courses from entry level to higher qualifications including extended diplomas and foundation degrees
- Stoke-on-Trent College offers a range of courses in Media, Arts and Design and Music and Performing Arts. It is Founder College of the National Skills Academy Centre Creative and Cultural.
- The Burslem School of Art is an arts based partnership providing training in art and design and particularly within ceramics.

Education & Skills

▶ **Creative and Digital industry businesses in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire benefit from close access to a large pool of graduates at not only local universities but at other nearby universities.**

Further afield, Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire's proximity to MediaCityUK and regional university courses in digital and creative industry related subjects ensures that digital and creative companies in the area have a wide access to a talented and skilled base of fresh talent.

- As well as the local universities of Keele and Staffordshire, other universities located within easy reach of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire provide a range of degree courses ranging from Computer Science to Film and Media Studies.
- The University of Birmingham's School of Computer Science offers undergraduate degrees in the areas of computer science, artificial intelligence and software engineering. Masters level courses include Advanced Computer Science, Robotics and Human Computer Interaction. Alumni can be found working at the BCC, EA Games and IBM.
- The School of Computer Science at the University of Manchester offers undergraduate courses in software engineering, artificial intelligence and computer systems engineering. Postgraduate subjects include Advanced Computer Science and Information Management.
- MMU (Manchester Metropolitan University) offers degree courses including Computer Games Technology; Games Development and Design; and Film and Media Studies.
- John Moores University in Liverpool provides a wide range of digital and media courses at undergraduate and graduate level including: Creative Writing, Media Production, Graphic Design, Computer Games Development and Multimedia Computing.

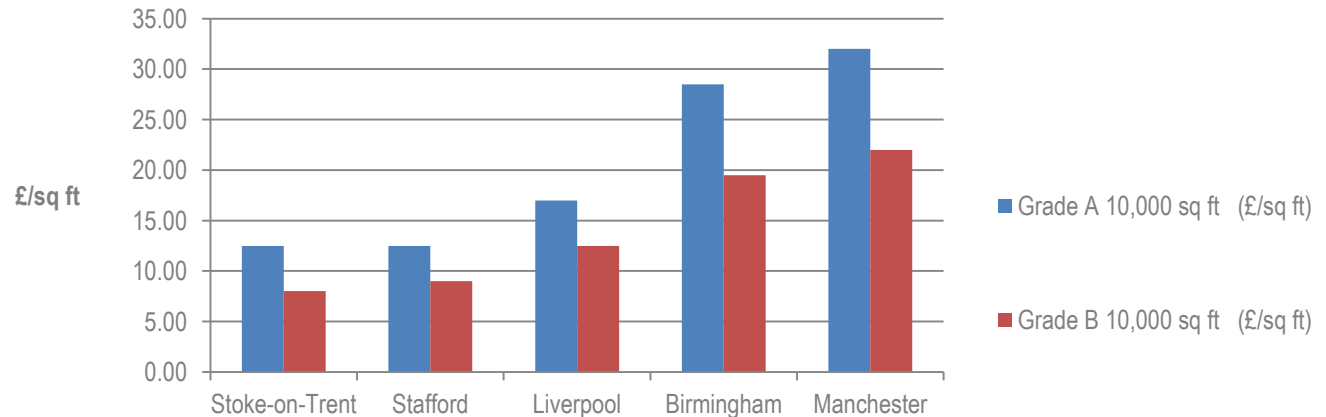
Sites & Premises

▶ **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, East Midlands and Manchester Airport with its World Freight Terminal are within an hour's drive of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, providing easy access to international markets. East Midlands Airport is the UK's busiest pure cargo airport and 2nd only to Heathrow.

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
- The creative sector is well supported locally. This includes support through an organisation called Factory. The latter provides free business development programme specifically designed to support small and medium enterprises working in the creative industries in Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire. Support and guidance is mainly provided in the area of business development. This includes: market intelligence, networking and training. The organisation also publishes a quarterly magazine for those working in the creative industries.
- The Stoke Film Office in partnership with Creative England supports production companies wanting to use the area for film production and locations.
- Other support networks include the South Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce and Industry which both provide support to industry. The North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce has a membership base of over 1,000 locally based businesses.
- 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 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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