

Google Mobility data for the North East LEP area Week ending Friday 1 January 2021

The Google mobility index is based on data from users who have opted into location history for their Google account. For each day it compares the number of visits to different types of places with the average for that day during the first six weeks of 2020.

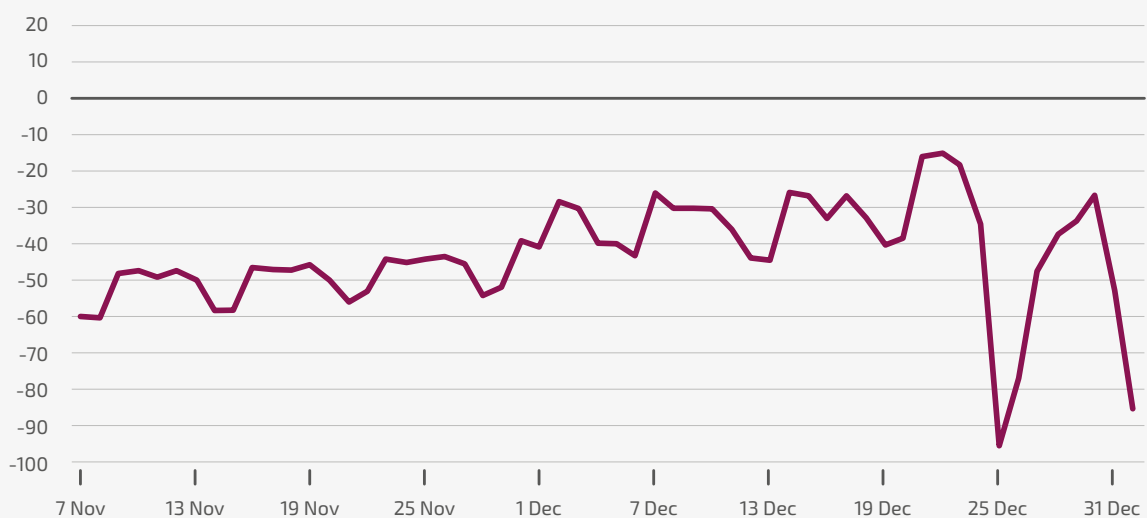
To provide a North East LEP area index, indices for County Durham, Northumberland and Tyne and Wear have been weighted based on population size and then combined.

The daily weighted index for North East LEP area visits to retail and recreation locations for the eight weeks to 1 January is shown below. These locations do not include supermarkets but, in retail terms, focus on shopping centres.

The mobility index suggests that:

- Visits to retail and recreation sites on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday before Christmas were at about 85 per cent of their level for these days in the first six weeks of 2020
- This is more than 10 percentage points higher than in the previous week
- It is around 30 percentage points higher than in the lock down period in late November
- Visit numbers in the week between Christmas and New Year were similar to numbers in early December

North East LEP area: Retail and recreation visit index
(compared to same day in early 2020)

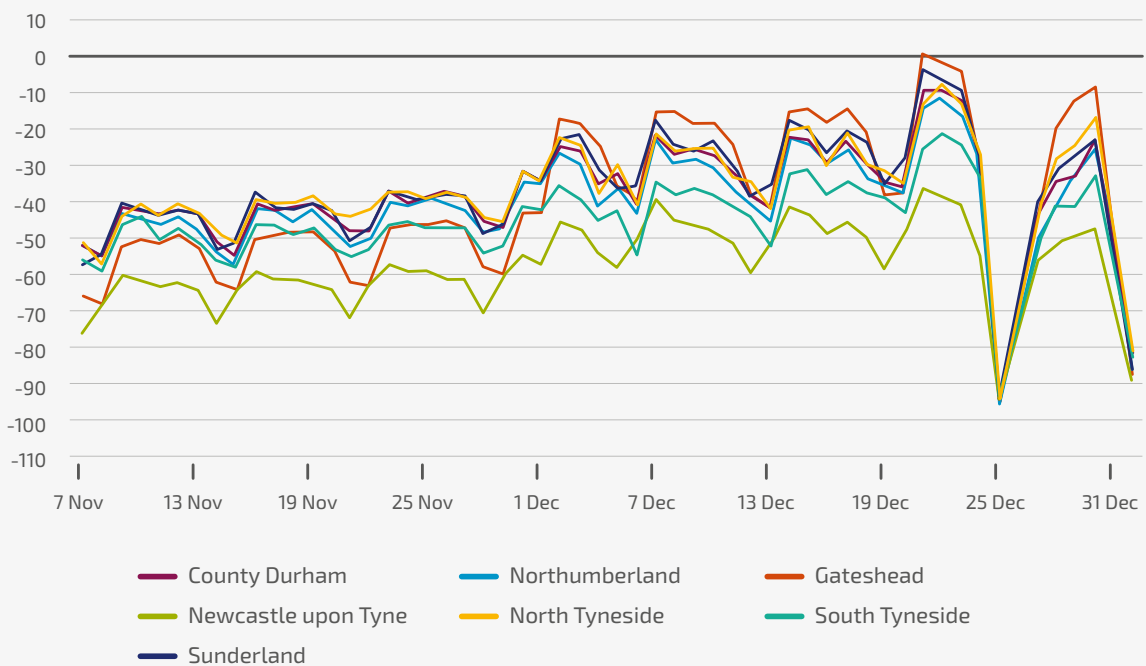


Source: Google mobility reports (w/e 1 January)

The retail and recreation visit indexes for each of the seven North East local authorities in this eight week period are shown in the next chart. Although there is some volatility, the chart highlights that:

- In the days leading up to Christmas, retail and recreation visits in Gateshead were at a similar level to those in the first six weeks of 2020 (this area includes the Metro Centre)
- The numbers of retail and recreation visits on these days in Sunderland, County Durham, North Tyneside and Northumberland were at about 90 to 95 per cent of the early 2020 levels
- In South Tyneside and, particularly, Newcastle upon Tyne the number of such visits were still noticeably below the levels in early 2020 (respectively, more than 20 and 35 per cent lower)
- The patterns in the week between Christmas and New Year were similar but about 10 percentage points lower in each area
- The level of December retail and recreation visits is usually much higher than earlier in the year: in 2019, nationally, the value of retail sales in predominantly non-food stores in December was higher than the combined total for January and February.

Retail and recreation: visit indexes (compared to same day in early 2020)



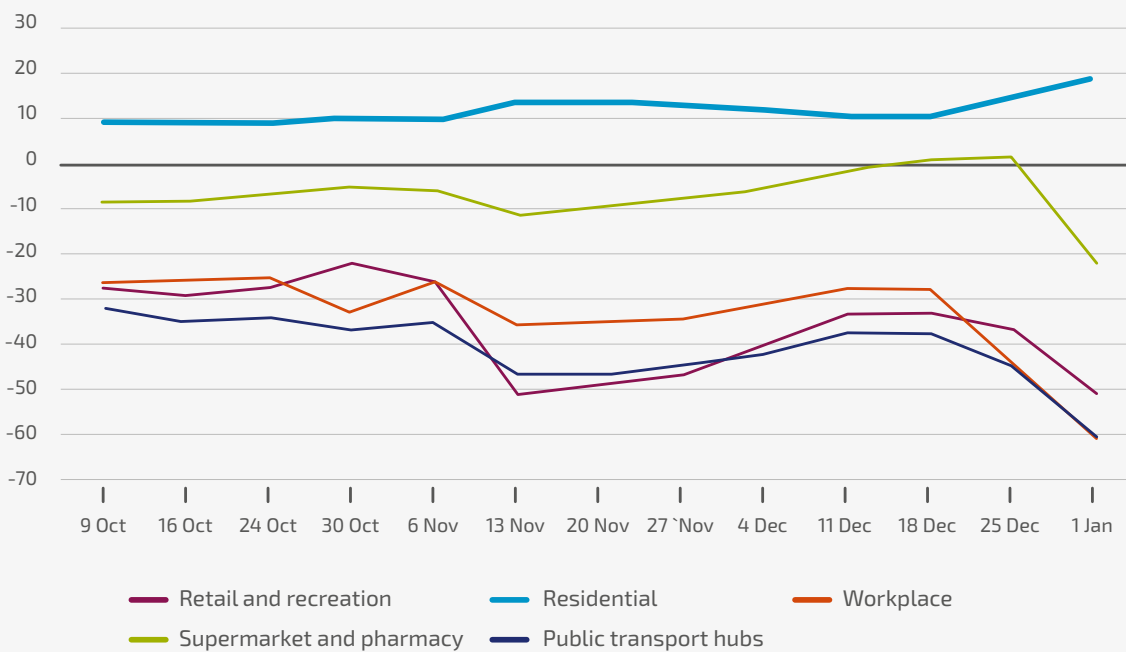
Source: Google mobility reports (w/e 1 January)

The complexity of the data means that comparisons between the indexes for different location types over a longer time period are easier to see using weekly averages. The next chart shows weekly averages for five location types in the North East LEP area for the 13 weeks to 1 January.

It highlights that:

- In the run up to Christmas, supermarket visits were at a similar level to that in early 2020
- The decrease in the number of workplace visits was not accompanied by an increase in retail and recreation visits, unlike the October half-term break (w/e 30 October)
- After the November lockdown, levels of visits to workplaces, retail and recreation sites and public transport hubs all increased but only to just below pre-lockdown, term time levels.

Retail and recreation: visit indexes (compared to same day in early 2020)



Source: Google mobility reports (w/e 1 January), the residential index is based on hours spent at home rather than visit numbers