

Shaping Our Place 2026

Local Development Framework

Core Strategy

Spatial Portrait

Background Paper

January 2010

Purpose of the Report

This Spatial Portrait aims to identify the key facts and characteristics of Herefordshire that have helped to identify key issues which the Local Development Framework will seek to address. These are issues that have either been apparent in the county for some time, are existing trends or new issues. All may present challenges and opportunities for the future.

Many of the key facts have been obtained from the State of Herefordshire Report (2009). This report is published annually by the Herefordshire Partnership and can be obtained online at www.herefordshirepartnership.com/FactsAndFigures.aspx

Key Facts

Social

Population:	178,400 (mid 2007 estimates)
Areas:	2,180km ² / 842 miles ²
Density / Sparsity:	0.9 persons per hectare, the 4 th lowest population in England
Population growth:	Growth of 2% between 2001 –2007. With fewer births than deaths each year since 2004, population growth due to net in-migration
Population Structure:	24% of Herefordshire's population is of state retirement age and is expected to rise. 18% are under 16 and expected to decline until 2016.
Ethnicity:	4% of Herefordshire's resident population are from ethnic groups other than 'white British' – 1.9% white other, 0.7% Asian / Asian British, 0.6% mixed, 0.4% Black / Black British.
Access to services:	Most part of the county fall within 10% most deprived nationally in terms of geographical access to services and barrier to housing.
Education:	63% of schools leavers achieve 5 GCSEs A* -C.

Economic

Numbers of homes:	78, 105 (March 2006)
Average house price:	£194,500 (2008)
Average income:	£20,304 (2008 median annualised earnings)
Employment:	78% of working aged population are employed, higher than regional average (72%) 15% of working population are self-employed, higher than regional average (8%)
Car ownership:	1.3 per household. 18% of households have no car / van

Environment

Environment:	Two Areas of Outstanding National Beauty (parts of) – Wye Valley and Malvern Hills, 4 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) including River Wye, 65 Conservation Areas 73 Sites of Special Scientific Interest 773 Local Wildlife Sites 5918 Listed Buildings 262 Schedules Ancient Monuments
Flooding:	18.5 % of County is situated in a flood zone

Geographical location

Herefordshire is predominately a rural county covering an area of 217,973 hectares situated in the south-west corner of the West Midlands region bordering Wales. Figure 1 below show the County of Herefordshire in relation to the region.

Figure 1: Location of Herefordshire



Characteristics of the County

The main geographical feature of the county is the River Wye, which enters Herefordshire near the Welsh town of Hay-on-Wye, flows east to Hereford and then southwards, leaving the county at the Wye Gorge, downstream of Ross-on-Wye. Most parts of the county are drained by the Wye river system, although parts of the east and south east are in the Severn Valley and the north is drained by the River Teme, as tributary of the Severn.

The County's landscape is one of rolling hills and wide river valleys interspersed with small villages. The eastern edge of the county borders with Worcestershire and runs along the line of the Malvern Hills, which rise to over 400 metres above sea level. The Black Mountains in the south west of the county form another elevated area.

Herefordshire has the 4th lowest overall population density in England (0.8 persons per hectare) and the population is scattered across the 217,973 hectares of the county.

Just under a third of residents live in Hereford city and just over a fifth live in the five market towns of Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury, Bromyard and Kington. This means that nearly half of the population lives in villages, hamlets and isolated dwellings in rural areas.

The sparsely populated county bring particular challenges for service delivery and the dependence on the private car.

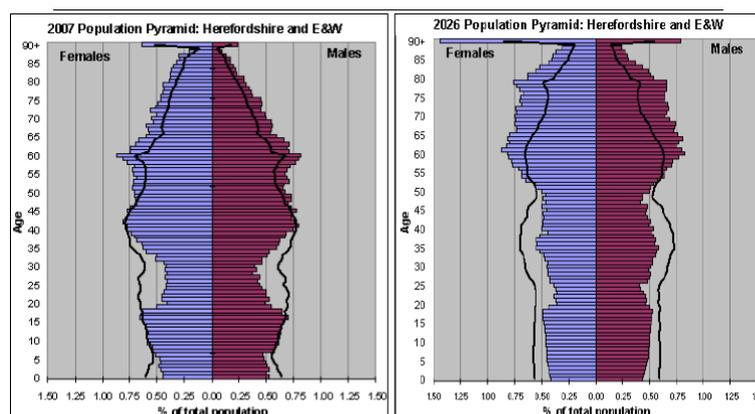
Figure 3: Population distribution and change.

Area	Mid-year estimate 2007	Change 2001 to 2007 (%)
Hereford City	55,400	+1%
Bromyard market town	4,600	+5%
Kington market town	3,200	-
Ledbury market town	9,900	+8%
Leominster market town	11,100	-
Ross-on-Wye market town	10,100	-
Herefordshire county	174,900	+2%

Age structure

Population profiles of the county highlight the numbers of people and percentages within each age group. These profiles show that the county has a greater number of over 50s and fewer 20 to 45 year olds than the average in England and Wales.

Figure 4: Population profiles



Sources: 2007 - mid-year estimates, ONS; 2026: Hfids - HC Research Team 2006-based population forecasts; E&W - ONS 2006-based national population projections. ONS data is Crown copyright.

Trends also show that the population by 2026 is ageing more rapidly than the national population and the county having fewer younger age groups. These demographics trends will have a number of issues for the Core Strategy and other documents including housing, transport, employment and education opportunities and access to services and facilities.

Figure 5: Population trends and forecast for Herefordshire

Age	Mid year estimates			2006 based forecasts	
	2001	2006	2007	2011	2026
Under 16	34,000	32,000	31,500	30,300	29,000
16 - 64	107,000	109,500	110,100	110,600	103,600
65 and over	33,700	36,300	36,900	41,600	61,000
Total population	175,800	177,800	178,400	182,400	193,600

Source: Herefordshire Research – Population of Herefordshire Feb 2009

Housing

At March 2006, there were 78,105 homes in Herefordshire, with an additional 2,381 being built over the last three years. 80% of homes built last year were on brownfield land.

Owner occupation is high although there are significant variations across the County. This would be expected to follow from the County's age distribution, with its higher than average number of older people (particularly the over 60's) who are likely to have paid off a mortgage. The proportion of socially rented properties in Herefordshire is lower than the average.

Figure 6: Housing Tenure

Tenure	Herefordshire	West Midlands Region	England & Wales
Owned outright	36%	30%	29%
Owned with a mortgage or loan	35%	39%	39%
Shared ownership (i.e. part rent / part mortgage)	0.86%	0.67%	0.64%
Socially rented from a Housing Association or from the Council	15%	21%	19%
Privately rented or 'other' (includes tied homes)	13%	10%	12%

(Source: 2001 Census)

The average house price is above the national average. This is caused by the higher volume of sales of detached homes in Herefordshire compared to England and Wales, which has effectively inflated the average house price.

House prices have risen much more steeply than earnings over the last decade - creating affordability issues in the process. The preferred measure for house price affordability is the ration of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earning. For 2008, the ratio for Herefordshire was 9.2, i.e. a house at the lower end of the market would cost 9.2 time average earnings.

Figure 7: Average house prices

Year of 3 rd quarter	Median property prices			Lower quartile property prices		
	England & Wales	West Midlands	Herefordshire	England & Wales	West Midlands	Herefordshire
2000	£82,000	£68,000	£86,000	£53,000	£48,000	£63,000
2007	£180,000	£150,000	£196,000	£129,950	£115,000	£149,000
2008	£174,000	£145,000	£197,000	£122,500	£110,000	£150,000

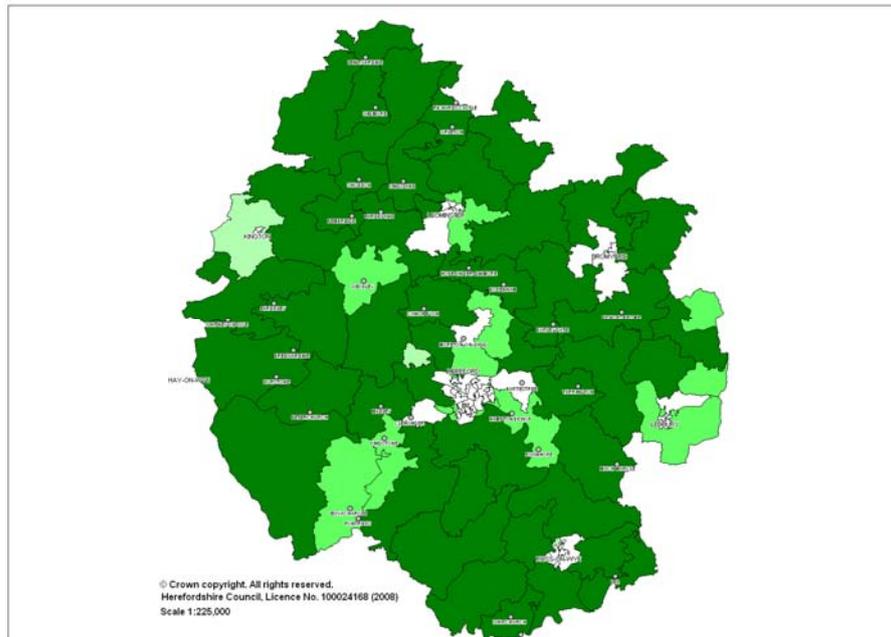
Source: HM Land Registry

Although the number of affordable housing completions has increased in recent years, the completion rate will need to continue to increase significantly in order to achieve the targets set out in the Phase 2 preferred option for the regional plan. Many of the rural villages are attractive places to live for people wishing to commute to Hereford and further a-field; however, increases in housing targets will also require the provision of new infrastructure.

Access to services

Herefordshire is widely regarded as being an affluent county, but this reputation masks the extremes in both deprivation and poverty. Most parts of the county fall within the 10% most deprived nationally in terms of geographical access to services and barriers to housing, and the average income of residents is significantly below both the regional and national averages - with pockets of severe deprivation in parts of Hereford and Leominster.

Figure 8: Indices of Deprivation



Source: Herefordshire Research – Indices of Deprivation 2007

Transport accessibility

Herefordshire plays a strategic role in facilitating cross boundary links between England and Wales. The county suffers from a limited strategic highway network. In a national context, vehicle flows along these routes are low, but coupled with interactions between the local and strategic networks, the local and strategic vehicle flows results in congestion, most notably within Hereford.

Despite high car ownership rates, a range of public transport serves Hereford and the market towns, in addition to ever improving walking and cycling links. Whilst there has been a reduction in the number of local bus services operating in the past few years, bus patronage is beginning to increase. There are two rail lines, one operating east to west linking Hereford with Birmingham, the second operating north to south providing links with Newport and Manchester. For the stations in Herefordshire, the total number of entries and exits increased by 21% between 2004 and 2007.

Over the plan period car use will inevitably increase, and how this demand is managed will be crucial in addressing the likely growth in congestion, the economic viability and desirability of the county and the impacts upon air quality. The need for significant investment in transport infrastructure is acknowledged.

Safer communities

In general, crime in Herefordshire has been falling since 2004. The proportion of residents in Herefordshire which are fearful of certain types of crime remains high despite the numbers of some of these crimes decreasing considerably over the last few years. This highlights the need to reassure people living, working and visiting the county that crime is low and the Local Development Framework can assist by ensuring that developments are design to feel safe.

Social Issues arising

- Need to provide for all generations
- Ensuring appropriate housing provision and affordability
- Provision of and access to important services and facilities
- Improving transport infrastructure
- Reducing opportunities for crime

Economic Prosperity

Education

Herefordshire performs well at GCSE level, with 63% of school leavers achieving 5 GCSEs A*-C. In addition, the county has a slightly lower proportion of people without qualifications compared to regionally and nationally, and over a quarter of the resident population is educated to degree level.

The provision of education is very important to Herefordshire's economy with an estimated 6,027 jobs (nearly 7% of the total workforce). Most state secondary schools provide for children aged 11-16 with the sixth-form provision mainly being

provided by Hereford Sixth Form College. Herefordshire College of Technology has spent £30 million on redeveloping itself as a 'Learning Village' in conjunction with Hereford College of Art. The agreement to develop the Herefordshire Learning Village may positively improve access to higher education courses as well as training in the skills desired locally for those who continue their formal education beyond secondary school. However, the limited higher education provision in the county has been identified as a factor in the loss of the younger generation from the county's population.

Skills

Higher level skills are considered to be NVQ Level 4 qualification or equivalent (HND, Degree and Higher Degree). In 2007, 28% of Herefordshire's working age population were qualified to NVQ level 4. This figure is similar to the West Midlands region, England and most of Herefordshire's neighbouring authorities.

However, in Herefordshire five wards have a high level of poor numeracy – Belmont, St Martins, Leominster North, Hinton and Holmer. The five areas with the highest levels of poor literacy are Belmont, Merbach, Castle, St Martins and Golden Cross.

Economy

Employment rate is measured by calculating the percentage of working age population that are employed (full time, part time and self employed). Working age population is defined as 16-59 for females and 16-64 for males. The data presented here is from the Annual Population Survey (APS)

Industry	Herefordshire		West Midlands	England
	No.	%	%	%
A : Agriculture, hunting and forestry	6,900	9%	1%	1%
B : Fishing	0	0%	0%	0%
C : Mining and quarrying	100	0%	0%	0%
D : Manufacturing	11,200	15%	14%	11%
E : Electricity, gas and water supply	0	0%	0%	0%
F : Construction	4,000	5%	5%	5%
G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods	14,300	19%	17%	17%
H : Hotels and restaurants	5,300	7%	6%	7%
I : Transport, storage and communication	2,600	3%	6%	6%
J : Financial intermediation	900	1%	3%	4%
K : Real estate, renting and business activities	8,800	12%	16%	18%
L : Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	2,600	3%	5%	5%
M : Education	6,600	9%	10%	9%
N : Health and social work	9,300	12%	11%	12%
O : Other community, social and personal service activities	3,400	4%	5%	5%
P : Private households with employed persons	0	0%	0%	0%
Q : Extra-territorial organisation and bodies	0	0%	0%	0%
Total employees	76,100			

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100. (Source: ABI 2007 full & part-time employees)

Figure 9:

Culture / Tourism / Leisure

Tourism is estimated to be worth in excess of £290 million to the County's economy due mainly to the attraction of beautiful unspoilt countryside and the strong cultural offer of the market towns. The rate of growth is about 2% per annum with the region attracting 4.8 million visitors per year, of which 93% are day visitors. Visitor attractions are characterised by small, seasonal enterprises in family ownership. Investment in Herefordshire's tourism potential may provide significant benefits for the County.

Hereford is well provided with open space, sports and leisure facilities, although there are variations in provision across the county. The provision of sports and leisure facilities can be quite poor in the remoter areas and so there is scope for improvement on many sites. Therefore developing policies for open space provision and enhancement in the Core Strategy will be important.

Shopping / Urban regeneration

With a population of 55,000, Hereford is identified as a sub-regional centre in the existing Regional Spatial Strategy and its traditional role has been to serve the administrative and commercial hinterland extending beyond the county. This sub-regional role will be further strengthened with city centre regeneration including a brownfield 100 hectare site to the north of the city centre.

Additional central area retail development is essential to claw back expenditure currently used at shops in Worcester, Cheltenham and Gloucester, as well as over the Internet. City centre regeneration presents a unique opportunity to develop an under-utilised area of land, strengthening the role of Hereford as a sub regional shopping centre and ensuring the City plays a full role in the wider rural economy.

Economic Prosperity issues arising

- Capitalise on education achievements
- Diversify the economy
- Regeneration the County
- Promote tourism and culture

Environment Quality and Climate change

Climate Change

Addressing climate change will be a key element in the Core Strategy. The requirements to reduce the need to travel, tackle traffic congestion, reducing flood risk and improve air quality are elements which effect climate change. In addition, the design and location of new housing and other development, the management of waste and the development of renewable energy can also contribute to addressing the issue of climate change. Another issue in relation to the impact of climate change is that of the changing face of the County through possible changes in agricultural practices and any knock-on effects on the rural economy. This aspect may present opportunities for addressing the impacts of climate change head on; for example, using areas of land for biomass production or wind energy. Ever growing demands for water to supply new homes, industry and agriculture will also be affected by

climate change. The issue of water availability will be a fundamental one for the Core Strategy.

Flooding

Significant areas of Herefordshire are low-lying and are liable to flood risk. From the 217, 000 hectares which make up the county, approximately 22, 500 hectares or 10% is situated within a flood zone 2, which is land assessed as having a medium probability of flooding and approximately 18,500 hectares or 8.5% is situated within a flood zone 3, which is land assessed as having a high probability of flooding.

Air Quality

In 2001 the A49 corridor was declared a 'Hereford City Air Quality Management Area' (AQMA), as a result of levels of the pollutant nitrogen dioxide exceeding the 40 µg/m³ set by the Government's National Air Quality Strategy. Levels of nitrogen dioxide are also being monitored at several locations in Leominster, resulting in an AQMA being declared in 2006 along the A44 - Bargates. An AQMA is also soon to be declared along the A40 corridor between Wilton and Pencraig, near Ross-on-Wye.

Natural and Built Environment

Herefordshire contains a wealth of listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments and conservations areas. These add to the special built quality and environmental character of many areas of the county and their protection and enhancement is recognised as an important ingredient for economic and neighbourhood renewal.

Key features in Herefordshire

- 2 Areas of Great Landscape Value (parts of)
- 4 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- 77 Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- 3 National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- 773 local wildlife sites (SWS, SINC and LNR)
- 117 Regional Important Geological sites (RIGS)
- 24 historic parks and gardens
- 64 conservation areas (CA)
- 1 Area of Archaeological Importance (Hereford)
- 262 Schedule Ancient Monuments
- 5,918 listed buildings.

Herefordshire is considered to be the West Midlands' most rural county and boasts a quality of landscape that is nationally acclaimed. Herefordshire has two landscape areas of national significance, the Wye Valley Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the south and the Malvern Hills AONB in the east.

Herefordshire is host to many important habitats and species. The importance of the nature conservation and geological resources is reflected in the number and variety of international, national and local designated sites.

Herefordshire also contains areas of archaeological importance. It is recognised that archaeological remains are a valuable but fragile part of the county's heritage. In addition to the large number of nationally designated Scheduled Ancient Monuments, the county also contains non-scheduled but nationally importance archaeological sits and those of regional and local importance.

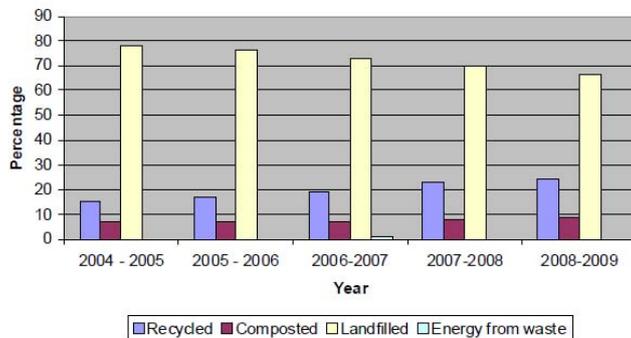
The archaeological importance of Hereford city was recognised by the designation in 1983 of a large part of the central area as an Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI).

There is an acknowledgement of the need to provide greater awareness of the importance of protecting and enhancing the County's natural and historic assets.

Waste

The proportion of waste recycled in Herefordshire has increased over the past few years. Household waste recycling has increase on last year from 19,712t to 20,116.35t (24.34%), composting has increased from 8% to 8.9% and land filled household was has decreased significantly from 60,634t to 55, 187.23t (66.76%). It is envisaged that waste going to landfill will decrease even further in future years now a new recycling service has come into operation in November 2009.

Figure 10: Percentage trends of household waste by management type 2004 – 2008/9



(Source: Herefordshire Council Waste Management Section)

Minimising the amount of waste sent to landfill sites will be a continuing pressure during the period up to 2026, as will the need to become increasingly self sufficient in managing the waste produced in the County.

Design

Herefordshire has a diverse range rather than one vernacular building style, of which the 'black and white' timber framed traditional buildings in the north of the county are particularly distinctive. Design and construction of future developments can have a impact on sense of place, feelings of safety (designing out crime) and contributing to the reduction in the effects of climate change.

Environmental Quality issues arising

- Need to address climate change and flooding
- Protect and enhance environmental assets
- Better use of resources
- Improving air quality
- Ensuring high quality of design / construction