

## Appendix C

### Baseline Information for Herefordshire

## Population, Health and Wellbeing

### Population

**C.1** The 2021 Census identified the population of Herefordshire to be 187,034 residents, of which 91,854 are male (49.1%) and 95,180 are female (50.9%) [See reference 66]. The population of the county grew by 2% in the decade from 2011, a rate that is lower than the corresponding rate for England and Wales (6.6%). In the decade between 2001 to 2011, Herefordshire's population grew by 4.9% [See reference 67].

**C.2** The 2020 mid-year population estimates, which were published in September 2021, give an indication of the distribution of population across the county. Just over half of the population was found to be living in areas defined as 'rural'. Just under a third of the population lives in Hereford city (61,500), and just under a fifth live in one of the three largest market towns of Leominster (12,400), Ross (11,200) and Ledbury (9,900) [See reference 68].

**C.3** The 2018-based subnational population projections estimate a county population of 199,470 for the year 2023, rising to 218,203 in 2041 [See reference 69].

**C.4** According to the mid-2021 population estimates [See reference 70], the highest proportion of residents in Herefordshire are within the 45-54-year and 55-64-year age brackets. However, the overall percentage of people in Herefordshire of working age (15-64) is below the national average. Nearly 16%

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of the population is within the age bracket 0-15, which is below the national (16.7%) and regional averages (17.2%). The 18-20-year-old age group has the highest internal migration outflow (1,000), followed by 25-29-year olds (700) (however, this age bracket also has the highest internal migration inflow).

**C.5** Herefordshire is predicted to experience a demographic change with an increasing elderly population. In 2016 those aged over 65 accounted for 24.3% of the population. By 2031 this age group is expected to account for 29.8% of the total population in Herefordshire. This will have implications for the economy, service provision, accommodation requirements and healthcare. There are expected to be 3,000 fewer people of working age (16-64) in 2031 compared to 2016 (58.8% in 2016 down to 53.9% in 2031) and similarly there is expected to be a decrease in the number of people in the 0-15-year age group (from 16.8% in 2016 to 16.3% in 2031) [\[See reference 71\]](#).

**C.6** 93.7% of Herefordshire's population is white English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British. This is significantly higher than both the West Midlands (79.2%) and England (79.8%) figures, indicating that the county is much less diverse [\[See reference 72\]](#).

**C.7** In mid-2019, Herefordshire had a population density of 88 persons per square hectare which compares to an average for West Midlands of 457 persons per square hectare. Herefordshire had the lowest population density across all of the local authorities within the West Midlands. The county had the twelfth lowest figure for persons per square hectare in England, across all local authorities [\[See reference 73\]](#).

**C.8** Hereford city has a much younger age profile than the county as a whole, with relatively high proportions of young adults and young children. The most rural areas have relatively more people of older working and early retirement age (50-70 year olds). The market towns and other areas (including larger villages like Colwall and Credenhill) have an age profile more similar to the county overall.

## Housing

**C.9** The 2018-based household projections identify how the number of households in Herefordshire is expected to grow from 82,350 residents in 2018, to 99,847 residents in 2043 (a rate of 21.3%). In comparison, the number of households in England is expected to increase from 23,204,246 in 2018 to 26,953,266 (a rate of 29.1%) [\[See reference 74\]](#).

**C.10** In 2019, Herefordshire contained 83,765 dwellings, of which 33,917 (40.5%) were located in Hereford City [\[See reference 75\]](#). Approximately 68% of dwellings in Herefordshire are owner occupied, which is slightly higher than the West Midlands (64.9%) and England (63.3%) averages. Only 0.98% of housing in Herefordshire is in shared ownership. Socially rented accommodation accounts for 14% dwellings in Herefordshire, whereas 18% of dwellings are privately rented [\[See reference 76\]](#). Herefordshire has less socially rented housing than both the West Midlands (19.0%) and England (17.7%) [\[See reference 77\]](#).

**C.11** Herefordshire has a much higher proportion of detached dwellings (40%) than the national average (25%). Some 22% of dwellings are semi-detached and 14% and 9% are mid terrace and end terrace, respectively [\[See reference 78\]](#). Flats make up 15% of dwellings and the remainder of dwellings are mobile or temporary structures. In 2018, 947 (1%) of dwellings in Herefordshire were vacant, with 0.3% being long-term vacant (6 months or more) [\[See reference 79\]](#).

**C.12** In November 2022 the average property price in Herefordshire was £321,214 which was above the average price in England of £315,073 [\[See reference 80\]](#). The affordability of property can be assessed by calculating the ratio of the median house price (of an existing dwelling), to the median gross annual residence-based earnings. Analysis of this data shows how Herefordshire had the worst housing affordability ratio in the West Midlands, with the county recording a ratio of 9.40 in 2021, an increase from 8.50 in 2020

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**[See reference 81]**. In contrast, the West Midlands had an overall affordability ratio of 7.52 in 2021, an increase from 6.51 in 2020 **[See reference 82]**. The corresponding figures for England were 8.96 in 2021 and 7.61 in 2020 **[See reference 83]**.

**C.13** In terms of rental costs, Herefordshire sits below the West Midlands and England median private rental costs for all housing categories (room, studio, one-, two-, three-, four- and more bedroom flats/houses) at £732 and £946 respectively. The median monthly rent in Herefordshire was £690 between October 2021 and September 2022. However, there is a lack of rental availability arising from removal of rental properties from the market in favour of holiday accommodation, short-term lets, and second homes **[See reference 84]**.

**C.14** In terms of homelessness, the rate for Herefordshire equalled 1.61 homeless households per 1,000 households in the period to April to June 2022. This rate is lower than the equivalent figure for the West Midlands (1.68), but higher than the rate for England (1.49) **[See reference 85]**.

**C.15** The Homelessness Act 2002 requires every local authority to carry out a review of homelessness in their district every five years and to publish a homelessness strategy based on the findings of the review. The Herefordshire Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 serves this purpose and identifies two umbrella factors that contribute to homelessness that Herefordshire Council seek to mediate and address. These are 'structural factors', and 'system failures' **[See reference 86]**.

**C.16** The adopted Herefordshire Core Strategy sets a minimum requirement of 16,500 new dwellings between 2011 and 2031 to meet market and affordable housing need **[See reference 87]**. This includes a broad distribution across Hereford (6,500 new homes), other urban areas (4,700 new homes) and rural settlements (5,300 new homes). So far, the Council has completed 6,382 new homes between 2011-2022, with most dwellings developed in the city of Hereford (47%). This is 1,768 fewer homes than the Council's net requirement,

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although the expectation is that the highest rate of housing completions will be towards the latter end of the plan period [See reference 88]. Table C.1 below outlines housing completions compared to Core Strategy targets.

**Table C.1: Housing Completions in Herefordshire compared to Core Strategy Targets (2022)**

[See reference 89]

Core Strategy Year	Net Requirements	Net Completions	Difference
2011/2012	600	341	-259
2012/2013	600	201	-399
2013/2014	600	331	-269
2014/2015	600	774	+174
2015/2016	600	327	-273
2016/2017	850	405	-445
2017/2018	850	776	-74
2018/2019	850	666	-184
2019/2020	850	904	+54
2020/2021	850	643	-207
2021/2022	900	1014	+114
Overall Total	8150	6382	-1768

**C.17** Alongside the current adopted Local Plan (Core Strategy), the Council produced a Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008 and a Local Housing Market Assessment 2013, which indicate that there is an urgent need to increase the provision of affordable housing in the county. Affordable dwellings make up 27.5% of the total homes delivered to date.

**C.18 Table C.2** below demonstrates the current affordable housing provision in the county.

**Table C.2: Affordable Housing Completions in Herefordshire (2022)**

[See reference 90]

Year	Number of Affordable Dwellings Completed
2011/2012	90
2012/2013	60
2013/2014	116
2014/2015	159
2015/2016	129
2016/2017	135
2017/2018	171
2018/2019	203
2019/2020	213
2020/2021	228
2021/2022	248
Overall Total	1752

**C.19** There have been concerns in the plan area over the lack of a five-year housing supply within the county and its effects on any neighbourhood plans adopted for more than two years. As of April 2021, Herefordshire Council had a 6.90 year supply. In addition, the results of the 2020 Housing Delivery Test indicate that delivery in Herefordshire was above 75% of housing required over the previous three years (106%) [see reference 91].

## Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

### C.20 Herefordshire Council's Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

Assessment (GTAA) identifies how there are 38 Gypsy and Traveller sites located across the county. This assessment, conducted in April 2022, identified that there were 45 pitches on six local authority sites, 44 pitches on 30 private sites, and 14 pitches located on two unauthorised developments. The assessment also identified four Travelling Showpeople yards consisting of 10 plots.

C.21 With respect to the future, the GTAA identifies a need for 35 additional plots for 2021-2041, based on the guidance prescribed via the government's guidance, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) (2015). The analysis also identified the need for nine additional Travelling Showpeople plots, as well as transit places, for the same period [\[See reference 92\]](#)

C.22 The existing sites are spread fairly widely across the county, however there are virtually no sites in the south and south west of the county. Sites operated by Herefordshire Council are outlined in the following section.

### Gypsy and Traveller Sites in Herefordshire [\[See reference 93\]](#)

#### Romany Close, Grafton

- Description:
  - Grafton is one of two sites based in Hereford the other being Watery Lane. It is a vibrant site which is occupied primarily by an extended family and has family members of all ages.

## Watery Lane, Rotherwas

■ Description:

- This site is quiet and well-kept. Many of the residents at Watery Lane have lived together for many years at various locations and it is close to Hereford City. Whilst one access road to the site floods, there is an alternative route and the site itself has not flooded.

## Bosbury

■ Description:

- This is a quiet rural site. The residents would benefit from having access to a vehicle to access local amenities. The nearest Market Town is Ledbury where there is easy public transport access to Hereford including a railway station in Ledbury.

## Openfields, Bromyard

■ Description:

- This site has been refurbished and is a valuable asset to the number of plots available within the county. The number of plots which have currently been refurbished are ten. Again this is a rural site and the residents would benefit from use of their own transport.

## Luston

■ Description:

- Croft Lane is a mixed age and culture site and is popular with New Age Travellers. The nearest town is Leominster where there is access to public transport including a railway station.



### Pembridge

- Description:
  - This site is in a rural setting and the residents would benefit from the use of a vehicle to access amenities. The nearest Market Town is Leominster where there is easy access to Hereford using public transport, there is also a railway station situated at Leominster.

**C.23** The Traveller Education Team is part of Herefordshire Council's Virtual School Team supporting vulnerable children to reach their potential. It provides extra support and help for families who are Romany, Roma, Gypsy, New Traveller, Showman, Circus, and Irish Traveller [\[See reference 94\]](#).

### Health

**C.24** Health is a cross cutting topic and as such many topic areas explored in this Scoping report influence health either directly or indirectly.

**C.25** There are 24 GP surgeries in Herefordshire, four of which are in Hereford. There are also 24 dental surgeries in the county. There are seven hospitals within Herefordshire. The primary NHS hospital is the County Hospital in Hereford, which has an accident and emergency department. The hospital is operated by the Wye Valley NHS Trust [\[See reference 95\]](#). Following an inspection in October 2022, the Care Quality Commission has identified how the County Hospital 'requires employment' [\[See reference 96\]](#). The NHS provides daily updates with respect to the closure of Accident and Emergency departments, and provides occupancy statistics for a range of different departments and provisions. For 'General and Acute Care' beds, the County Hospital in Herefordshire was operating at a capacity in excess of 85% for the majority of January 2023 [\[See reference 97\]](#).

**C.26** There is one private hospital, two specialist mental health hospitals and three community hospitals [\[See reference 98\]](#).

### Life Expectancy

**C.27** Life expectancy for those born in Herefordshire between 2018 and 2020 was estimated to be 83.75 years for women and 79.18 years for men. The corresponding figures for England were estimated to be 83.1 years for females and 79.3 years for males [\[See reference 99\]](#).

**C.28** Health inequalities exist across Herefordshire. For example, those born in the most deprived 10% of areas in Herefordshire have a shorter life expectancy at birth than those living in the least deprived 10% cent by an average of 4.2 years for males and an average of 3.0 years for females. However, this gap is one of the smallest among counties with a similar level of overall deprivation to Herefordshire [\[See reference 100\]](#).

**C.29** However, those living in the most deprived areas are 36% more likely to die prematurely (i.e. under 75 years of age) of cancer; 22% more likely to die prematurely of cardiovascular disease and 18% more likely to die from respiratory disease. Residents of the most deprived areas of Herefordshire are approximately a third more likely to die as a result of suicide than the county population in general [\[See reference 101\]](#)

### Obesity

**C.30** In 2018/19, the combined proportion of obese and overweight reception year children was 23.7%, 10.3% of whom were obese. For year 6 children, the prevalence of obesity was 21.0%, while the combined figure for obese and overweight children was 34.7% [\[See reference 102\]](#). These figures are in line with national figures [\[See reference 103\]](#). Alcohol-specific hospital stays and

levels of smoking for those aged under 18 are worse than the England average, although better than the England average for adults [\[See reference 104\]](#).

66.8% of adults in Herefordshire are physically active, which is higher than both the West Midlands (63.2%) and England (66.3%) figures. Participation in sport at least once a week has generally been increasing year on year since 2011/12, with 59% and 15% of adults identifying themselves as active or fairly active, respectively [\[See reference 105\]](#).

### Perception of Well-being

**C.31** Residents of Herefordshire reported having marginally higher levels of life satisfaction (7.55 out of 10.00) than the average for the UK (7.54) in the 2021/22 period [\[See reference 106\]](#). For the topic, 'feeling that things done in life are worthwhile', Herefordshire scored 7.82 out of 10, above the corresponding figure of 7.78 for England. The figure for 'happiness' in Herefordshire, for the same period, was calculated at 7.44 which was marginally lower than the English figure of 7.45 [\[See reference 107\]](#).

### Loneliness and Social Isolation

**C.32** Loneliness is a subjective, negative feeling experienced where there is a discrepancy between the amount and quality of social contacts one has, and the amount and quality one would like to have. It is related to, but distinct from, social isolation which is an objective state where there is an absence of social contacts and social connectedness [\[See reference 108\]](#).

**C.33** Emerging evidence indicates that loneliness is associated with poor health and well-being outcomes including hypertension, coronary heart disease, strokes, depression and mortality. Research also suggests that loneliness can increase the risk of premature death by 30% [\[See reference 109\]](#).

**C.34** Living alone has been found to be a risk factor associated with loneliness and involuntary social isolation, as well as multiple falls, functional impairment, poor diet, smoking, and three self-reported chronic conditions; arthritis and/or rheumatism, glaucoma, and cataracts. Loneliness is caused by a number of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. While loneliness can occur at any age, it can be exacerbated by major life events that typically correspond with ageing such as bereavement, loss of mobility and declining physical health.

**C.35** In Herefordshire, a quality of life survey undertaken by Data Orchard in 2018 indicated that 60% of respondents were in contact with family, friends or neighbours most days; 34% at least weekly but 6% were only in contact once a month or less [See reference 110]. The survey also highlighted how 26% of respondents felt lonely some of the time during their past week, while 8% of the respondents felt lonely 'most or all of the time'.

## Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation

**C.36** Leisure activities contribute to the quality of life of residents, providing amenity and opportunities for enhancing intellectual, spiritual and physical wellbeing. Additionally, they represent a tourism asset and their provision can result in economic benefits to the area.

**C.37** Herefordshire has a range of cultural and leisure opportunities, including Eastnor Castle and Hampton Court Castle, a number of houses and gardens to visit, as well as its characteristic market towns. Hereford city is home to the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery and The Old House, a well preserved example of a 17th century timber framed building.

**C.38** Many visitors to Herefordshire come for its countryside, including the Wye Valley in the south of the county and the wealth of walking opportunities across the county. There is a network of public rights of way (PROWs) across the countryside including promoted routes such as the Wye Valley Walk and the

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Three Rivers Ride. The Offa's Dyke Path, a National Trail, passes through the county near Kington. National Cycle Network (NCN) routes 44, 46, 426 and 423 are present within the county. The county also contains Queenswood Country Park near Bodenham. This includes an arboretum, semi-natural ancient woodland (a SSSI) and a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

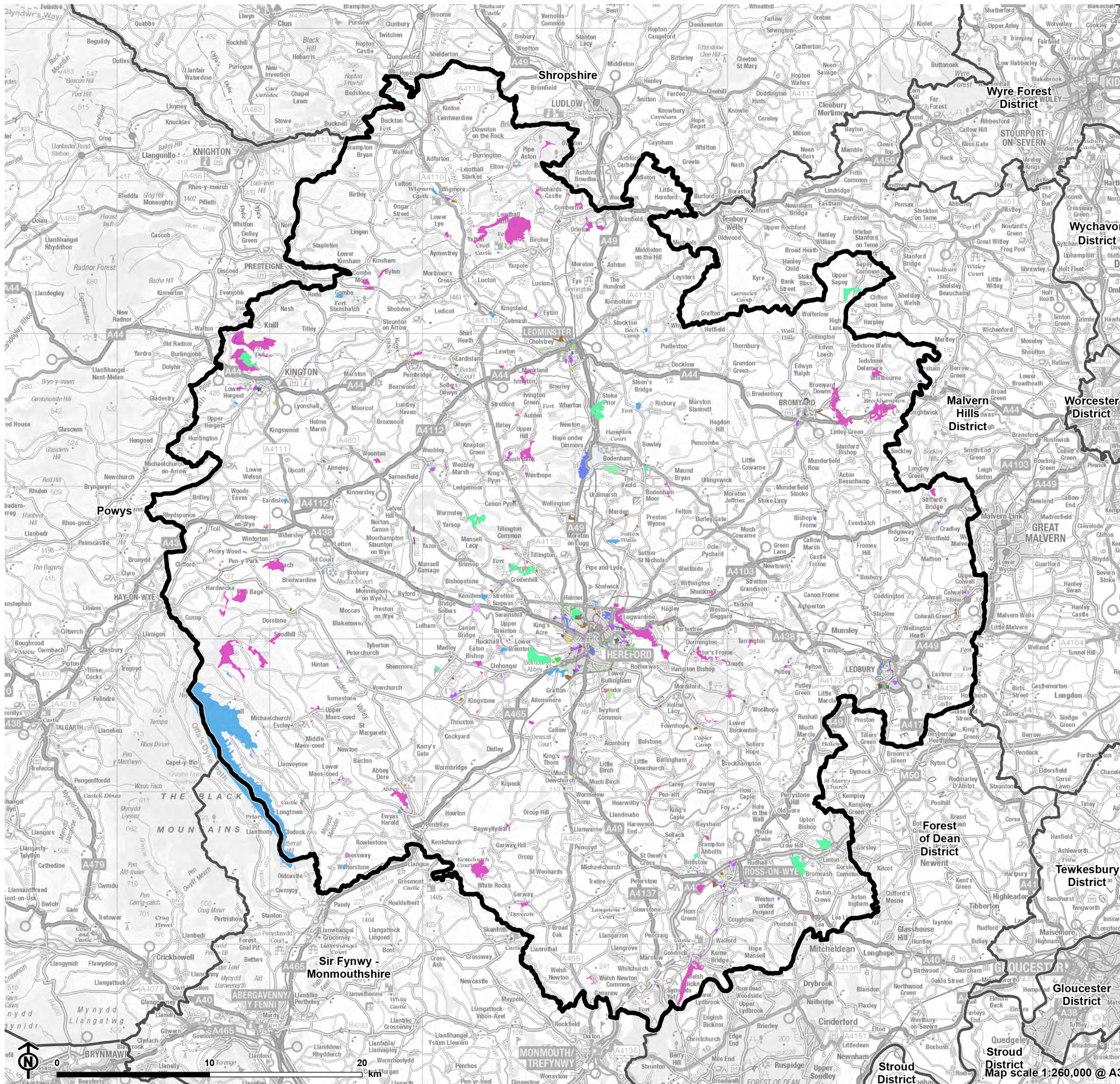
**C.39** Herefordshire has a number of leisure centres managed by Halo, on behalf of Herefordshire Council. There are Halo leisure facilities in Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster, Hereford, Ross-on-Wye and Wigmore **[See reference 111]**.

**C.40** Herefordshire Council has prepared a number of Playing Pitch Assessments, which review provision in various parts of the county. The Herefordshire Play Facilities Study **[See reference 112]** identified 145 sites in the county that have equipped provision for children and young people, of which 48% are in the rural parishes and 52% are in urban areas.

**C.41** Local standards of open space provision are outlined in the Council's Policy Direction Paper: Open Space, Sport, and Recreation which aims to direct development to 2026. **Figure C.1** shows the open spaces and recreational facilities available across Herefordshire. The following section presents observations made in relation to Herefordshire's main settlements.



Figure C1: Open Spaces/Recreation Facilities



- County of Herefordshire
- Neighbouring authority boundary
- PPG17 Open Space Assessment**
- Allotments
- Amenity
- Athletics
- Bowling
- Cemetery
- Civic Spaces
- Common
- Cricket
- Football
- Gardens
- Golf
- Green Corridors
- Local Nature Reserve
- Local Park
- Major Park
- Natural
- Nature Reserve
- Picnic Site
- Play
- Play Area
- Recreation Ground
- Rugby
- School Playing Fields
- Tennis
- Village Green



## Observations of Existing Open Space in Herefordshire by Settlement [See reference 113]

### Hereford City North

- Open Space Observation:
  - Extensive under provision of natural and semi-natural green space and outdoor sports facilities.
  - Extensive over provision of parks and gardens.
  - Average provision for children and teenagers.
  - Over provision of amenity green space.

### Hereford City South

- Open Space Observation:
  - Average provision of parks and gardens.
  - Extensive under provision of natural and semi-natural green space and outdoor sports facilities.
  - Average provision for children and teenagers.
  - Extensive over provision of amenity green space.

### Bromyard

- Open Space Observation:
  - Extensive under provision of parks and gardens.
  - Extensive over provision of natural and semi-natural green space.
  - Under provision of amenity green space and outdoor sport.

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- Average provision for children and teenagers.

### Kingston

- Open Space Observation:
  - Extensive under provision of parks and gardens.
  - Extensive over provision of natural and semi-natural green space.
  - Under provision of amenity green space and outdoor sports facilities.
  - Average provision for children and teenagers.

### Ledbury

- Open Space Observation:
  - Extensive under provision of parks and gardens and outdoor sports facilities.
  - Extensive over provision of natural and semi-natural green space.

### Leominster

- Open Space Observation:
  - Extensive under provision of parks and gardens and outdoor sports facilities.
  - Extensive over provision of natural and semi-natural green space.
  - Under provision of amenity green space.
  - Average provision for children and teenagers.



## Ross-On-Wye

- Open Space Observation:
  - Extensive under provision of parks and gardens, amenity green space and outdoor sports facilities.
  - Extensive over provision of natural and semi-natural green space.
  - Average provision for children and teenagers.

## Levels of Physical Activity

**C.42** Physical inactivity is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality, accounting for 6% of deaths globally. People who have a physically active lifestyle have a 20% to 35% lower risk of cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease and stroke compared to those who have a sedentary lifestyle. Regular physical activity is also associated with a reduced risk of diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis and colon and breast cancer and with improved mental health. In older adults, physical activity is associated with increased functional capacities. The estimated direct cost of physical inactivity to the NHS across the UK is over £0.9 billion per year **[See reference 114]**.

**C.43** Department of Health physical activity guidelines recommend that over a week adults should undertake a total of at least 150 minutes of at least moderate physical activity. Moderate activity can be achieved through brisk walking, cycling, gardening and housework, as well as various sports and exercise. Alternately, an adequate level of activity can be achieved over a week by undertaking 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity such as running, football or swimming. All adults should also aim to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week and minimise sedentary activities.

**C.44** In 2017/18, approximately two thirds of Herefordshire adults met the recommended level of physical activity of 150+ moderate intensity equivalent minutes per week, a figure similar to that reported for England. In the same

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period 23% of Herefordshire adults were physically inactive, again similar to England as whole [\[See reference 115\]](#).

**C.45** 15.1% of 15-year-olds in Herefordshire in 2014/15 were reported as partaking in at least one hour of physical activity daily; not significantly different to England as a whole. Around two in every three (65.1%) had a mean daily sedentary time in the last week of over seven hours per day, which was a lower proportion than reported for England (70.1%) [\[See reference 116\]](#).

**C.46** In addition to physical activity, the potential contribution of leisure more broadly to health is being viewed increasingly from a public and population health perspective where leisure is regarded as the domain of lifestyle where people have greatest control. Consequently, it is seen an important resource that can positively influence physical, psychological and spiritual health [\[See reference 117\]](#).

## Education

**C.47** There are 101 publicly funded primary, secondary and special schools in Herefordshire [\[See reference 118\]](#). For the period January 2021 to December 2021, 4.6% of the county's residents had 'no qualifications', which compares to figures of 7.8% for the West Midlands and 6.6% for Great Britain [\[See reference 119\]](#). The percentage of those in Herefordshire with NVQ3 (2 or more A levels or equivalent) equated to 60.9%, a figure that compares to 57.2% for the West Midlands and 61.5% for Great Britain [\[See reference 120\]](#). The percentage of those possessing an HND, Degree or Higher Degree level qualification equalled 39.4% in Herefordshire, a figure that is higher than the figure for West Midlands (38.9%) but lower than the percentage for Great Britain (43.6%).

**C.48** The county has prepared a Schools Capital Investment Strategy to identify and guide future priorities [\[See reference 121\]](#)

**C.49** The New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering opened to new students in September 2021 and offers university-level studies in engineering, technology and sustainable construction. The institute has two campuses. One is located in the centre of Hereford, with the other being located at Hereford's Skylon Park [\[See reference 122\]](#).

## Deprivation

**C.50** The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 [\[See reference 123\]](#) is a measure of multiple deprivation in small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA), in England. Seven domains of deprivation are measured: Income Deprivation; Employment Deprivation; Health Deprivation and Disability; Education, Skills and Training Deprivation; Crime; Barriers to Housing and Services; and Living Environment Deprivation. Each domain contains a number of indicators. The seven domains are combined to give a multiple deprivation score. There are 116 LSOAs in Herefordshire and 32,844 nationally [\[See reference 124\]](#) .

**C.51** Herefordshire contains one LSOA in the 10% most deprived in the country (Herefordshire 017D within the Newton Farm ward). Eight LSOAs are within the 20% most deprived in the country (two within the Hinton and Hunderton ward and one within the Ross North, Leominster South, Leominster North and Rural, Leominster East, Red Hill and Newton Far) with an additional five LSOAs within the 30% most deprived in the country (one within the Central ward, one within the Bromyard West ward one within the Saxon Gate ward, one within the Red Hill ward and one within the Newton Farm ward). Figure C.2 illustrates the Indices of Multiple Deprivation as they relate to Herefordshire.

**C.52** In 2017, there were an estimated 82,2020 households in Herefordshire, 9,990 (12.2%) of which were in fuel poverty [\[See reference 125\]](#). This is slightly lower than fuel poverty rates in the West Midlands (12.6%) [\[See reference 126\]](#) but higher than England as a whole (10.9%) [\[See reference 127\]](#). The majority of households affected by fuel poverty live in rural areas [\[See reference 128\]](#). A

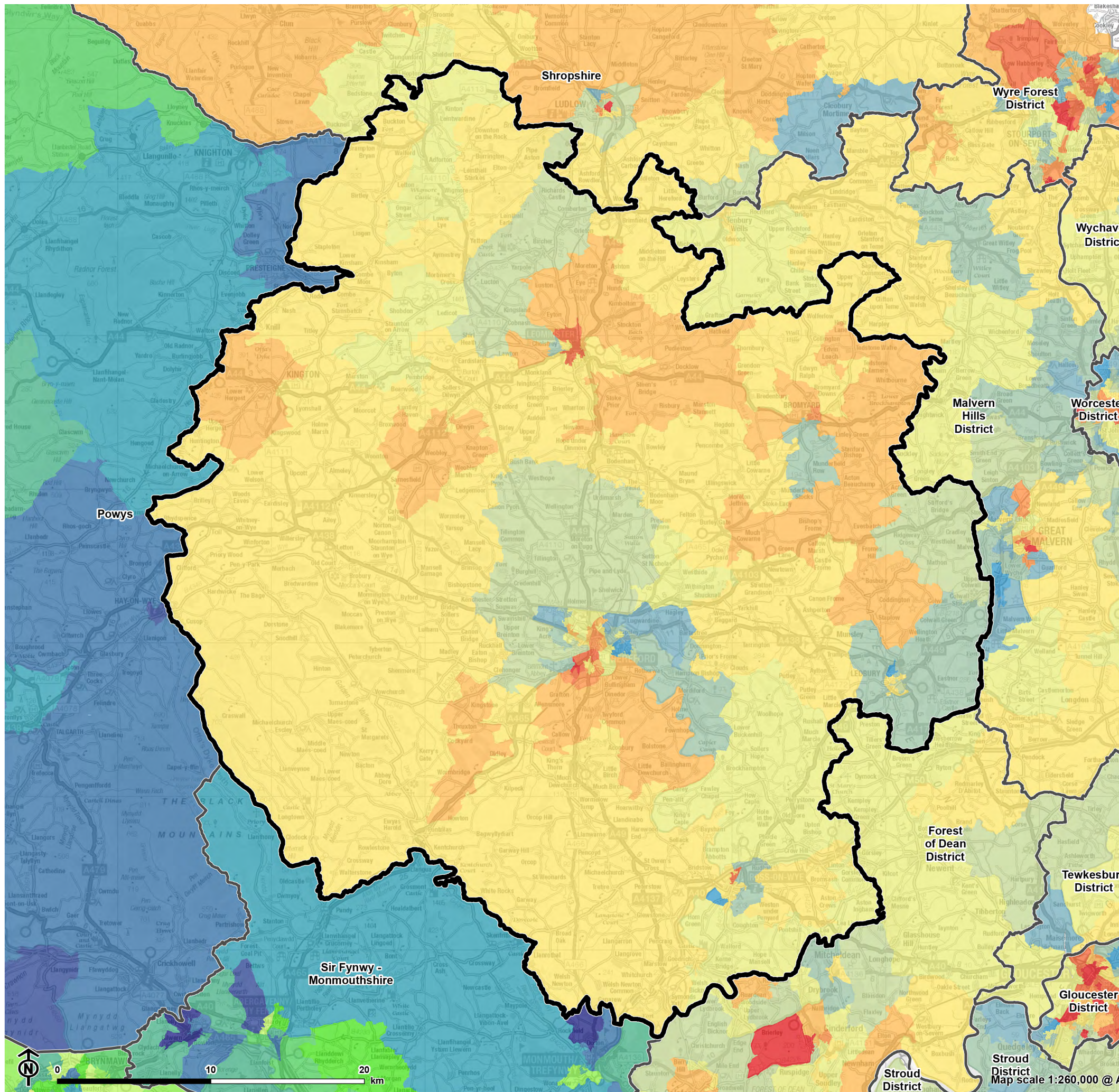
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household is considered to be fuel poor if they have required fuel costs that are above the national median level and were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the poverty line [\[See reference 129\]](#).

**C.53** About 12% (3,725) of children live in low-income families. This is lower than the national average of 17.0% of children living in low income families [\[See reference 130\]](#) .



Figure C2: Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)



County of Herefordshire

Neighbouring authority boundary

**Index of Multiple Deprivation (Decile)**

1 (most deprived)

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10 (least deprived)

**Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (Decile)**

1 (most deprived)

2

3

4

5

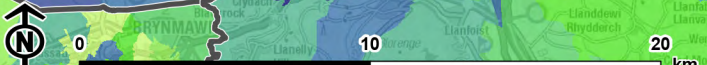
6

7

8

9

10 (least deprived)





## Crime and Safety

**C.54** Herefordshire is policed by the West Mercia force. For the year to September 2022, the crime rate in West Mercia equated to 72 crimes per 1000 people [See reference 131]. This compares to a crime rate of 99.8 for the West Midlands, and 99.1 for England. For violence against a person, statistics for the same period identify a rate of 30.7 crimes per 1,000 people, compared to 42.8 for the West Midlands and 35.5 for England [See reference 132]. For the period to December 2018, the crime rate in Herefordshire was 56.42 [See reference 133]. There appears to be a correlation between crime and the most deprived areas of Herefordshire [See reference 134].

## Economy

### Economy and Employment

**C.55** Labour market statistics for the period October 2021 to September 2022 show that 96,700 people in Herefordshire were economically active, accounting for 78.9% of the population. This figure is in excess of the natural figure of 77.5% [See reference 135]. Of those economically active, 76,000 (63.2%) were employees and 19,500 (13.3%) were self-employed. Of the employees, 50,000 (65.8%) were working full-time, with 26,000 (34.2%) working part-time [See reference 136].

**C.56** Some 3,000 (3.1%) people were unemployed [See reference 137]. The percentage of those unemployed is lower than the percentages for both the West Midlands (4.9%) and Great Britain (3.7%). Of those economically inactive (23,400), the majority were identified as being retired (28.9%), long-term sick (26.7%) or 'looking after the family /home' (23.2%). The percentage of those

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retired is higher than the figures for both the West Midlands (11.5%) and Great Britain (14.1%) [\[See reference 138\]](#).

**C.57** In terms of employment by occupation, again for the period October 2021 to September 2022, the highest percentage (44.5%) is attributed to 'Soc 2020 Major Group 1-3' [\[See reference 139\]](#). This includes:

- Managers, Directors and Senior Officials (12.3% compared to 10.5% for Great Britain).
- Professional Occupations (18.5% compared to 26.0% for Great Britain).
- Associate Professional Occupations (13.7% compared to 14.9% for Great Britain).

**C.58** **Table C.5** provides a summary of employee jobs in 2021 for Herefordshire, the West Midlands, and Great Britain [\[See reference 140\]](#). As the table shows, Herefordshire has higher percentages, when compared to the West Midlands, for the numbers of employees engaged with:

- Manufacturing.
- Construction.
- Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles.
- Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities.
- Accommodation and food service activities.
- Human health and social work activities.
- Arts, entertainment and recreation.

**C.59** The gross weekly pay for full-time workers in Herefordshire, for 2022, equated to £543.2, a rate less than the corresponding figures for West Midlands (£617.5) and Great Britain (£642.0) [\[See reference 141\]](#). A provisional figure for Gross Disposable Household Income in 2019 was £20,631 for Herefordshire. This was lower than the figure for England (£21,978), but higher

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than that for the West Midlands (£18,350) [See reference 142]. Low pay translates into the county's GVA which is low at £20,738 per head. This compares to the England average of £28,096 [See reference 143].

**C.60** Hereford's stock of jobs grew by 6.3% between 2015 and 2019, 1.3% higher than the national average and a considerably stronger performance than the three largest towns in the county, Leominster, Ledbury and Ross on Wye, all of which experienced modest job losses during this period [See reference 144].

**Table C.3: Employee Jobs in Herefordshire in relation to regional and national averages (2021)**[See reference 145]

Employee Jobs by Industry	Herefordshire (%)	West Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)
Mining and Quarrying	0.0	0.0	0.1
Manufacturing	14.5	10.4	7.6
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning,	0.2	0.4	0.4
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	1.2	0.9	0.7
Construction	5.3	4.3	4.9
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	18.4	16.1	14.4
Transportation and storage	2.3	5.9	5.1
Accommodation and food service activities	7.9	6.6	7.5



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Employee Jobs by Industry	Herefordshire (%)	West Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)
Information and communication	3.0	3.6	4.5
Financial and insurance activities	0.9	2.1	3.6
Real estate activities	1.6	1.7	1.8
Professional, scientific and technical, activities	6.6	6.9	8.9
Administrative and support service activities	7.9	9.3	8.9
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	1.6	3.8	4.6
Education	7.9	8.7	8.8
Human health and social work activities	15.8	14.7	13.7
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	3.0	2.5	2.3
Other service activities	1.6	1.9	1.9

**C.61** There are 10,620 businesses in Herefordshire, across 11,900 local units (sites or workplaces). The majority (86.8%) of businesses are micro, with up to nine people in the business. Some 11.2% of businesses are small (10-49 people), 1.8% are medium (50-249 people) and 0.3% are large (250 people or more) [[See reference 146](#)].

**C.62** The economy of Herefordshire benefits from its strong strategic connections, despite the county's relatively rural location. The county benefits

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from being on the motorway network that connects South Wales with the West Midlands. The county also has direct and regular rail links to London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Cardiff. Birmingham, Bristol and Cardiff airports are all accessible within a 90-minute drive.

**C.63** Within the county there are a number of global companies – including Cadbury/Mondelez, Heineken, Cargill, Kingspan, and Special Metals, which operate alongside well-known British brands – including Tyrells, Weston’s Cider, and PGL, most of whom have started and grown in Herefordshire.

**C.64** An Economic Vision was implemented by Invest Herefordshire in December 2021 to identify the ambitions and intentions of a range of stakeholders and partners, to help make Herefordshire a better place to live, work and learn. Much has already been achieved in recent years to implement this proactive pursuit of growth [\[See reference 147\]](#). Major investments in the plan area include:

- The Old Market retail and leisure development: This £90m development, in partnership with British Land, brought a new cinema, retailers that include a department store and high-end supermarket and restaurant chains reinforcing the role of Hereford as a retail destination.
- Fastershire: A £32.5m programme of investment in superfast broadband infrastructure, delivering a 21st century digital network, to 55,000 homes and businesses countywide.
- Hereford Enterprise Zone: A 74-hectare new business park development which has already secured over £23m of public and private investment delivering business growth and new job opportunities.
- Halo Leisure: Investment of £10million in the redevelopment of a range of sports and leisure centres to enhance the user experience, and improve the company’s economic viability.
- Securing over £43m from central government for road infrastructure schemes which will enable the development of several hundred city centre homes and form the first section of a Hereford bypass.

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- Investing £7m in the construction of a new Livestock market to facilitate the retail and leisure development within the city and provide a state-of-the-art market to serve the Marches agricultural sector.

**C.65** These and other investments represent well over £250m of recent public and private investment in the county, improving the economic infrastructure and enabling private sector growth.

### Town Centre, Tourism and Retail

**C.66** In 2015, the visitor economy generated £442 million in Herefordshire [See reference 148]. This supports about 6,688 jobs in the tourism industry. Tourism is strong in all the market towns, which are characteristic of the region. These provide attractions as well as places to stay, eat and shop [See reference 149]. The county has a dedicated website to promote tourism across Herefordshire [See reference 150]

**C.67** There are only around 25 hotels in Herefordshire, offering approximately 820 bedrooms (excluding guest houses / bed and breakfasts, etc.). The majority of these hotels are located around Hereford and Ross-on-Wye [See reference 151].

**C.68** The main retail and cultural centre of Herefordshire is Hereford city. It is the largest settlement in the plan area, making up 25% of the population of the county and accounting for a significant proportion of its productivity. Hereford Cathedral contains nationally important treasures, such as the Mappa Mundi and the Magna Carta, and draw many visitors each year. Other key attractions include Hereford Racecourse, Hereford Football Club, the New Cattle Market and Belmont Abbey. There are a number of festivals in Hereford throughout the year, which attract both locals and visitors. These include the Borderlines Film Festival and Herefordshire Art Week.

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**C.69** Herefordshire's market towns each play a critical role in the county's economy as focal points for employment, retail, tourism, leisure, culture, business investment and growth, and for housing and access to services. The Council has supported each of the five market towns - Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye - to create Market Town Economic Development Investment Plans [\[See reference 152\]](#).

- Leominster has the second largest urban population in Herefordshire and is in a strategic location on crossroads of A49 and A44 with access to Wales and central location in the Marches. It has a railway station with good connectivity to Hereford and Shrewsbury and Cardiff and Manchester beyond. The town has a wealth of heritage buildings which has been recognised by Historic England in awarding the town Heritage Action Zone Status with a substantial funding allocation. The town's heritage and strong antiques sector have the potential to attract a substantial number of tourists [\[See reference 153\]](#).
- Bromyard is one of the smallest market towns in the county with a population of 4,284. Bromyard has history and heritage buildings from the medieval, Georgian, Victorian, inter-war, post war and post millennium periods which are host to a high number of independent retailers. The town is a traditional small rural service centre supporting a wider dispersed population [\[See reference 154\]](#).
- Kington is a distinctive town on the Welsh border which has a very strong vernacular and individual character making its built environment unique and engaging for visitors. The key gateway position of the town gives it real potential to operate as a gateway into Wales (and vice versa), as a small little-known settlement it has significant capacity with the right investment to delight and surprise people as a visitor destination exploiting its position as a location on the crossroads of the A49 and A44 with access to Wales and central locations in the Marches. The visitor appeal of the town is further enhanced by its access to both a river and little known but beautiful open spaces [\[See reference 155\]](#).
- Ledbury acts as a key service centre to the surrounding rural area, east Herefordshire and neighbouring Gloucestershire and Worcestershire.

## Appendix C Baseline Information for Herefordshire

Ledbury railway station has regular services to Hereford, Malvern, Worcester, Birmingham and London. Ledbury has a strong voluntary sector with over 120 local groups. It has a number of visitor attractions and hosts a number of events throughout the year [\[See reference 156\]](#).

- Ross-on-Wye is also well connected. It is located on the A40 which runs through Gloucester to Abergavenny and beyond. The town also has good road links to Birmingham and the Midlands via the M50 motorway (the 'Ross-on-Wye spur' from the M5) and to South Wales via the A40/A449 dual carriageway. Ross-on-Wye is located within the Wye Valley National Landscape and is next to the River Wye. Its picturesque buildings include the Market House and The Prospect [\[See reference 157\]](#).

**C.70** During 2022, Nexus Planning undertook Town Centre Health Checks for Hereford, Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye [\[See reference 158\]](#). Each profile provided information concerning the split of floor space between different town centre uses and provided data on observed vacancy rates (2022). All of the towns were compared against the UK 2022 vacancy rate of 13.8%, with local trends from 2012 being observed:

- In Hereford, the vacancy rate was 17.5%, up from 12.6% in 2012.
- In Bromyard, the vacancy rate was 7.1%, down from 8.9% in 2012.
- In Kington, the vacancy rate was 14.3%, up from 13.2% in 2012.
- In Ledbury, the vacancy rate was 9.3%, up from 5.4% in 2012.
- In Leominster, the vacancy rate was 16.94%, up from 5% in 2012.
- In Ross-on-Wye, the vacancy rate was 7.4%, down from 16.0% in 2012.

**C.71** Each Health Check elaborated on the key data by providing commentary on the changing nature of the uses, the nature of pedestrian flows, accessibility, environmental quality, and perceptions of safety [\[See reference 159\]](#). The evidence has helped to inform the Market Town Investment Plans that the Council has facilitated [\[See reference 160\]](#).

**C.72** Despite a challenging context, the market towns around Herefordshire are considered to be well placed to realise some of the opportunities associated with future high streets. Herefordshire's market towns are strategically well placed in terms of relationship to Hereford and Worcester, offering a great place to live, visit and work. As people's approach to work and quality of life requirements change, the towns are well placed to benefit from an increasing transition to a digital economy, with people working from home or flexible workspaces in attractive, less densely populated locations away from city centres [\[See reference 161\]](#).

## Transport

**C.73** The primary road network in Herefordshire generally radiates out from Hereford and Leominster. The A49 and A438 provide north-south and east-west links across the county respectively, via Hereford. The A44 provides an east-west link via Leominster. The A465 connects Hereford with Abergavenny and the A438 links Hereford with parts of Eastern Wales. The A40 changes into the M50 at Ross-on-Wye, offering residents access to the motorway network. Hereford is a hotspot for congestion in the county, particularly around the main river crossing of the A49 and the bridge at St Martin's Street, which is controlled by traffic lights [\[See reference 162\]](#). As part of the Hereford Transport Package, the City Link Road was opened in December 2017 in Hereford which links Commercial Road and Edgar Street. Future transport and infrastructure improvements in Hereford include:

- the Southern Link Road in the South Wye area which will reduce congestion on Belmont Road and provide improved access to the Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas; and,
- the Hereford Bypass which will provide an alternative route for through traffic.

**C.74** There are no commercial airports within Herefordshire, with the nearest airports being at Birmingham and Cardiff. There are four train stations within

## **Appendix C** Baseline Information for Herefordshire

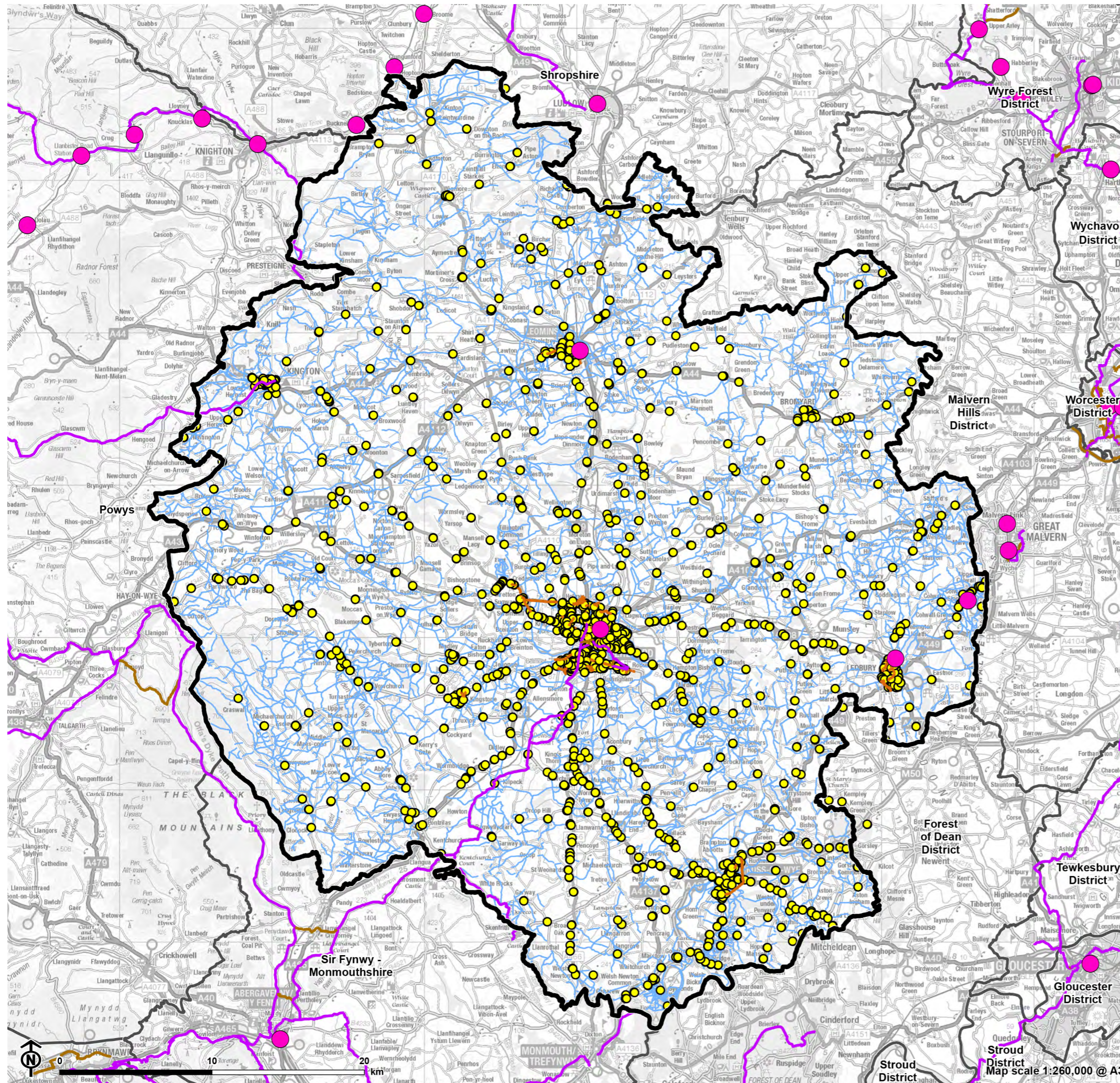
Herefordshire at Hereford, Leominster, Colwall and Ledbury. These are served by the following services:

- Transport for Wales services from Milford Haven to Manchester Piccadilly.
- Transport for Wales service from Cardiff to Holyhead.
- Great Western Railway service from Hereford to London Paddington.
- London Northwestern Railway service from Hereford to Birmingham.

**C.75** Two further stations lie just outside the county boundaries, near Leintwardine - Hopton Heath train station and Bucknell train station. Figure C.3 shows the extent of the sustainable transport network.



Figure C3: Sustainable Transport Network



- County of Herefordshire
- Neighbouring authority boundary
- Rail station
- Bus stop
- Public Right of Way
- National Cycle Network (NCN)
- NCN Link
- Cycle network

0 10 20 km



## Appendix C Baseline Information for Herefordshire

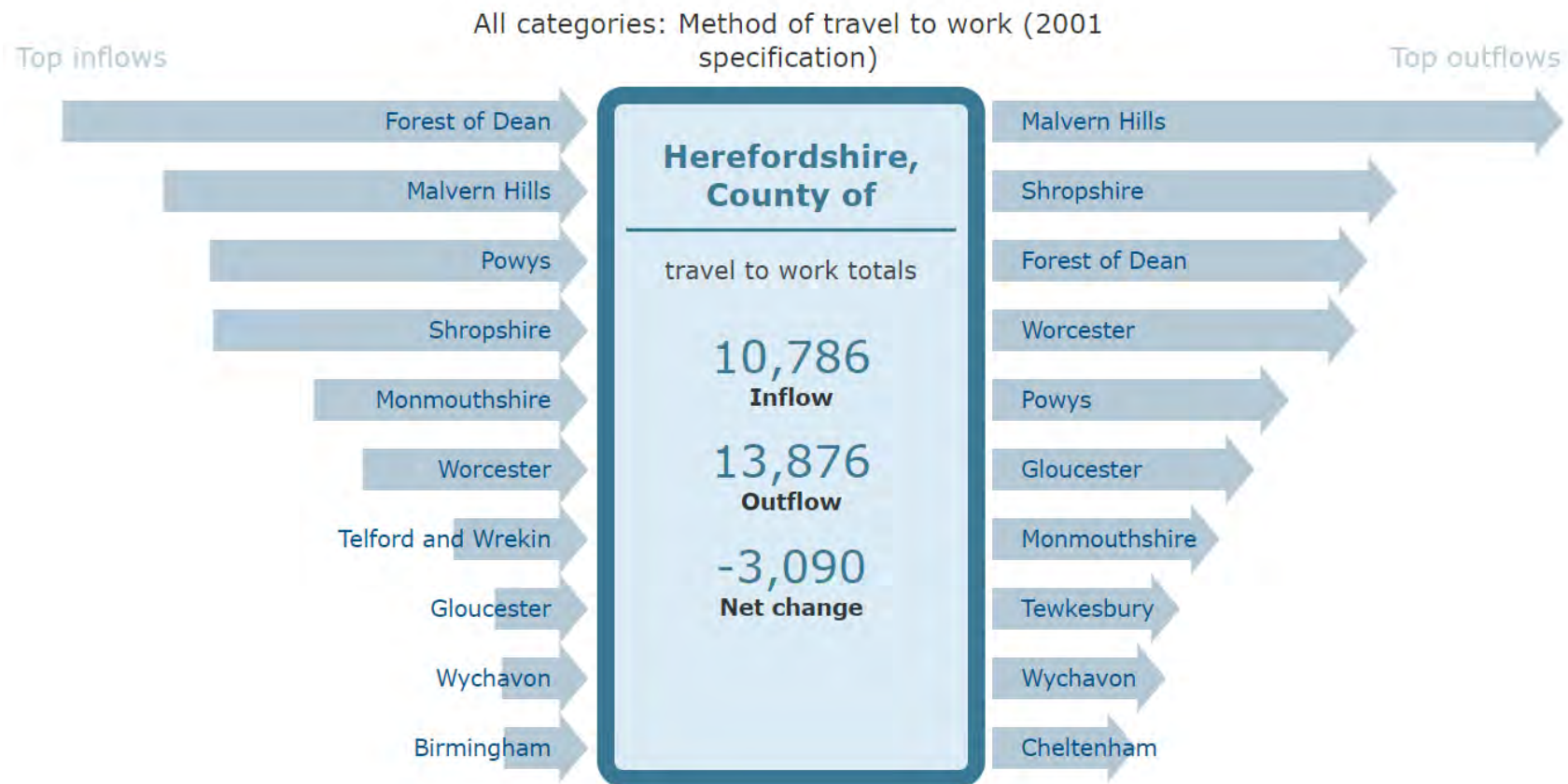
**C.76** Bus services in Herefordshire are provided by a number of operators, including First Buses, Lugg Valley Travel, N Maddy Coaches, Stagecoach West, and Yeomans Canyon Travel [\[See reference 163\]](#). Generally, the urban areas (Hereford and the market towns) have a more extensive range of bus services and these are more frequent than in the rural areas.

**C.77** The majority of households in Herefordshire own either one (41.6%) or two (30.4%) cars or vans. Car ownership is higher in Herefordshire than in the West Midlands and England, as 11.7% households own three or more vehicles compared to 8.0% in the West Midlands and 7.4% in England. There are also variations in car ownership across the county, with 46.4% of households in the City of Hereford having at least one car. Some 16.4% of households across the county have no access to a car. Car ownership is particularly high in Holmer and Shelwick parish, with 78.0% households owning either one or two cars and only 6.0% not owning a car or van [\[See reference 164\]](#).

**C.78** The most common method of travel to work is driving a car or van, which is a trend seen across the country. Some 6.3% of people in Herefordshire work from home, which is greater than in the West Midlands (3.0%) and England (3.5%). Nearly 10% of people in Herefordshire walk to work, which is similar to England as a whole, although higher than for the West Midlands. In Hereford City, slightly fewer people drive to work (37.4%) and slightly more travel to work on foot (15.3%). More people also cycle to work (5.2%) compared to 2.5% across Herefordshire as a whole. Figure C.4 shows commuter flows in and out of Herefordshire [\[See reference 165\]](#).

**C.79** In 2017/18, 89 people were killed or seriously injured on Herefordshire's roads. The rate has remained, statistically speaking, unchanged since 2016, and is also one of the lowest rates in the West Midlands region for deaths or serious injuries resulting from road traffic collisions [\[See reference 166\]](#).

Figure C.4: Flows of commuters in and out Herefordshire



## Biodiversity and Geodiversity

**C.80** Herefordshire is a largely rural county and as such has a rich biodiversity offering. The countryside consists primarily of arable fields, interspersed with pasture and woodland. There are four sites of international importance for nature conservation within Herefordshire: the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which passes through the county from Symonds Yat to Clifford, via Hereford; Wye Valley Woodlands SAC, which sits alongside the River Wye in the southern tip of the county; and Downton Gorge SAC and River Clun SAC, which both lie in the northern part of the county.

**C.81** The following section outlines the key environmental problems/threats relevant to the internationally designated biodiversity sites within Herefordshire. Although not within Herefordshire, the key environmental/problems associated with the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC are also identified as previous HRA work undertaken in Herefordshire has indicated the potential for likely significant effects on the SAC as a result of development in Herefordshire.

### European Sites within (or partly within) Herefordshire

#### River Wye SAC

##### Key environmental problems/threats

- Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SAC identifies the main threats facing the site to be the decreasing quality of water; small scale development impacting the hydromorphology and character; the invasive species of Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and hybrids; lack of communication between management levels;

incompatibility between fishery management and SAC features; outdated water abstraction agreement; pressure from public access; the risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition which exceeds site relevant critical loads; inappropriate scrub control; under grazing; and poor site management when undertaking works on Network Rail's assets.

### Downton Gorge SAC

#### Key environmental problems/threats

- Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SAC identifies the main threats facing the site to be the adverse impact of deer; the over rearing of pheasants by game management; a few small scale issues with forestry and woodland management; the spread of disease; several invasive species; and the risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition which exceeds site relevant critical loads.

### River Clun SAC

#### Key environmental problems/threats

- Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SAC identifies the main threats facing the site to be the increasing pressure of siltation; loss of suitable habitats and food sources through water pollution; low breeding success of Freshwater Mussel; the spread of disease; physical modification; the invasive species of Himalayan balsam; and the change in land management.

## Wye Valley Woodlands SAC

### Key environmental problems/threats

- Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SAC identifies the main threats facing the site to be the increasing pressure of deer; poor woodland management; spread of invasive species; habitat fragmentation which risks hindering the ecosystem; and the risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition which exceeds site relevant critical loads.

## European Sites outside of Herefordshire but within 15km

## Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC

### Key environmental problems/threats

- Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SAC identifies the main threats facing the site to be the structural deterioration of roosts sites that are in inhabited privately owned buildings vulnerable to disturbance; and pressure from public access.

**C.82** There are three National Nature Reserves (NNRs) within Herefordshire: Moccas Park, The Flits and Downton Gorge. There are also a number of NNRs bordering, or close to the boundary of Herefordshire, to the south and west. There are seven Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) in Herefordshire. These include Queenswood, which is part of the Queenswood Country Park. Queenswood LNR partially coincides with Dinmore Hill Woods SSSI.

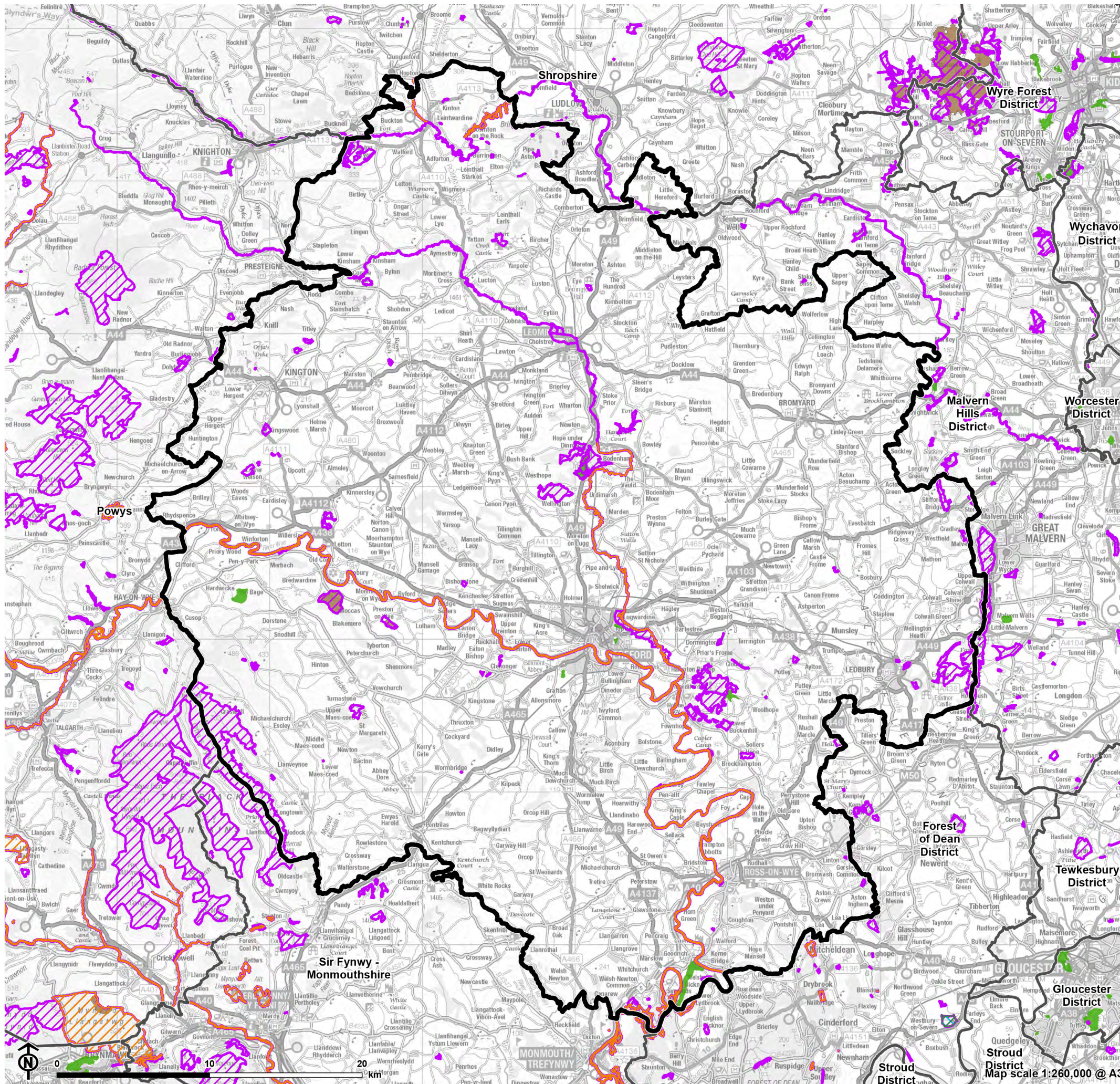
**C.83** There are a total of 79 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in Herefordshire. Some of these are cross-boundary, including the River Teme

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SSSI, River Wye SSSI, Malvern Hills SSSI and Upper Wye Gorge SSSI. Of the 5,794.75ha of SSSIs, 39.0% is in favourable condition; 39.01% is in unfavourable but recovering condition; 19.80% is in unfavourable condition; and, 2.20% is classed as being in declining condition [See reference 167]. Due to the high number of SSSIs, the majority of the county falls within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone. Figure C.5 shows designated biodiversity assets across Herefordshire.



Figure C5: Designated Biodiversity Assets



- County of Herefordshire
- Neighbouring authority boundary
- Special Protection Area
- Special Area of Conservation
- Ramsar site
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Nature Reserve



**C.84** There are 685 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in Herefordshire. These are spread across the county but there is generally a higher density of LWS in the west. There are also 119 Local Geological Sites in the county.

**C.85** The county includes a range of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats, including lowland deciduous woodland, lowland meadows and pasture and lowland dry acid grassland.

**C.86** Herefordshire Council has published an Ecological Network map [See [reference 168](#)], which identifies the key areas for biodiversity in the county. This shows core areas for biodiversity, buffers around those core areas, biodiversity corridors and stepping stones, and sustainable land use areas (areas with proposals for habitat restoration or creation).

## Historic Environment

**C.87** There are a number of heritage designations in Herefordshire, from individual buildings and structures of interest to the distinctive character of the market towns. Herefordshire possesses a rich historic environment which includes numerous Iron Age hill forts, sites of Roman towns, defensive features such as Offa's Dyke and the border castles, together with some of the best preserved traditional framed buildings in the country. The richness of the historic environment is reflected in the number of designated heritage assets encompassing a wealth of listed buildings, historic parks and gardens, scheduled monuments and conservation areas. There are 5,938 Listed Buildings in Herefordshire (127 Grade 1, 358 Grade II\* and 5,453 Grade II). There are 265 Scheduled Monuments across the county, as well as 25 Registered Parks and Gardens (11 Grade II\* and 14 Grade II). There are also 179 Unregistered Parks and Gardens in Herefordshire. Lastly, there are non-designated heritage assets across the county which the Local Plan can help to identify and protect such assets.

**C.88** There are 64 Conservation Areas in Herefordshire, including country house estates, the historic centre of Hereford, market towns and villages. Of