

Living better

People in Herfordshire enjoy a great standard of life compared to other parts of the UK, a survey has found.

The Quality of Life Report 2009 for Herfordshire shows that the county remains a great place to live and work, despite the local impact of the recession.

The survey, which monitors social, economic and environmental issues found:

- We are the country's fourth highest earners behind London, Surrey and Buckinghamshire
 - Our children do much better at school than the national targets set for them
 - Herfordshire is one of the safest counties in the country with crime levels falling further in 2009.
- But the survey showed the effects of the worst slump since the 1930s as Herfordshire has seen:
- a rise in the rate of unemployment
 - a decline in the housing market
 - a decrease in the volume of traffic.

The survey also revealed the cost to the environment

of our high quality of life with Herfordshire clocking up high levels of energy and water consumption. The county could also generate more renewable energy.

Recycling figures are improving with 44 per cent of household waste recycled or composted in 2009 compared to 38 per cent in 2008.

Derrick Ashley, Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Waste, said: "These findings show that Herfordshire is still a desirable place to live.

"It is one of the safest counties in the country, our residents are wealthier than the national average and enjoy good health, and children do well at school and university.

"However, it is clear from this report that to continue to enjoy the quality of life being experienced in the county we need to carefully plan and protect the future of our environment."

To view the report in full visit www.hcet.org.uk/qol

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Derrick Ashley, Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Waste



Our wildlife

Efforts to save Herfordshire's water vole population have been a success with 22 per cent of sites showing positive signs. Control of the American Mink, the vole's main predator, is aiding the recovery.

Skylark populations tell us a great deal about condition of our farmland. Populations are in steep decline in the Eastern region – 26 per cent over 15 years – but Herfordshire has seen a drop of just two per cent.



Butterflies had a good year in 2009 with more species on the increase than on the decrease. Rare spring butterflies the Grizzled Skipper, the Dingy Skipper and the Green Hairstreak all doubled their populations.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) have shown a dramatic improvement over the past six years with those in a favourable condition increasing from 68 per cent in 2004 to 92 per cent in 2009.

