

Appendix C

Place profiles



Place profile - Worcestershire County Council

DEMOGRAPHIC

Measure	WCC (Above / equal to / below national average)	National average
Demographics		
Area (km2)	1,741	-
Population (2023)	614,185	-
Population forecast (2032)	646,150	-
Age 0-15	17.2%	18.5%
Age 16-64	59.5%	63.0%
Age 65+	23.3%	18.3%
Population density (km2) (2021)	346.8	433.5
Proportion of pop. in rural Output Areas	23.9%	16.8%
Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) (1 is the most deprived, 10 is the least deprived)		
Income	6	5
Employment	6	5
Skills	6	5
Health	6	5
Crime	6	5
Housing	5	5
Living env.	6	5

ECONOMIC

Measure	WCC (Above / equal to / below national average)	National average
Economy		
Claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16-64 (2025)	3.1%	4.2%
Council tax base	225,128	-
Total rateable value of all businesses	£537,957,925	-
GVA per hour	£34.3	£39.7
Gross median pay	£588.6	£618.70
Employmt. rate (16-64)	79.4%	75.7%
Economically active (16-64)	81.2%	78.9%
% pop - Level 3 skills	17.0%	16.9%
% pop - Level 4 skills	32.3%	33.9%
Estimated % of jobs earning below Living Wage Foundation rates	16.7%	15.9%
% of residents who travel less than 10km to work	33.8%	35.3%
% of residents who travel more than 10km to work	23.0%	18.7%
Housing target	663	-
5 year housing land supply (years)	3.3	-
Employment land (ha)*	70.9	-

*Required employment land as set out in each area's Local Plan or Demand Study

Please note that figures for Housing Target, council tax base, total rateable value 5-year housing land supply and employment land are amalgamations of the 6 districts' figures in the absence of a whole County figure.

Place profile - Bromsgrove District Council

DEMOGRAPHIC

Measure	BDC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Demographics		
Area (km2)	217	1,741
Population (2023)	100,679	614,185
Pop. forecast (2032)	107,119	646,150
Age 0-15	18.4%	17.2%
Age 16-64	58.6%	59.5%
Age 65+	23.0%	23.3%
Population density (km2) (2021)	457.1	346.8
Proportion of pop. in rural Output Areas	14.4%	23.9%
Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) (1 is the most deprived, 10 is the least deprived)		
Income	7	6
Employment	7	6
Skills	7	6
Health	7	6
Crime	6	6
Housing	6	5
Living env.	7	6

ECONOMIC

Measure	BDC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Economy		
Claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16-64 (2025)	2.5%	3.1%
Council tax base	38,663	37,521
Total rateable value of all businesses	£73,373,503	£89,659,654
GVA per hour	£42.3	£34.3
Gross median pay	£661.4	£588.6
Employmt. rate (16-64)	82.3%	79.4%
Economically active (16-64)	83.8%	81.2%
% pop - Level 3 skills	16.6%	17.0%
% pop - Level 4 skills	36.6%	32.3%
Estimated % of jobs earning below Living Wage Foundation rates	16.9%	16.7%
% of residents who travel less than 10km to work	25.7%	33.8%
% of residents who travel more than 10km to work	26.1%	23.0%
Housing target	715	663
5 year housing land supply (years)	1.98	3.3
Employment land (ha)*	28	70.9

*Required employment land as set out in each area's Local Plan or Demand Study

Place profile - Malvern Hills District Council

DEMOGRAPHIC

Measure	MHDC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Demographics		
Area (km2)	557	1,741
Population (2023)	81,822	614,185
Pop. forecast (2032)	88,585	646,150
Age 0-15	15.4%	17.2%
Age 16-64	56.2%	59.5%
Age 65+	28.4%	23.3%
Population density (km2) (2021)	137.7	346.8
Proportion of pop. in rural Output Areas	56.2%	23.9%
Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) (1 is the most deprived, 10 is the least deprived)		
Income	6	6
Employment	6	6
Skills	7	6
Health	8	6
Crime	7	6
Housing	4	5
Living env.	5	6

ECONOMIC

Measure	MHDC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Economy		
Claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16-64 (2025)	2.4%	3.1%
Council tax base	33,558	37,521
Total rateable value of all businesses	£47,752,897	£89,659,654
GVA per hour	£33.4	£34.3
Gross median pay	£546.9	£588.6
Employmt. rate (16-64)	74.5%	79.4%
Economically active (16-64)	74.5%	81.2%
% pop - Level 3 skills	16.1%	17.0%
% pop - Level 4 skills	38.8%	32.3%
Estimated % of jobs earning below Living Wage Foundation rates	26.6%	16.7%
% of residents who travel less than 10km to work	27.5%	33.8%
% of residents who travel more than 10km to work	23.0%	23.0%
Housing target	646	663
5 year housing land supply (years)	2.06	3.3
Employment land (ha)*	64.3	70.9

*Required employment land as set out in each area's Local Plan or Demand Study

Place profile - Redditch Borough Council

DEMOGRAPHIC

Measure	RBC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Demographics		
Area (km2)	54	1,741
Population (2023)	87,059	614,185
Pop. forecast (2032)	88,279	646,150
Age 0-15	19.2%	17.2%
Age 16-64	61.6%	59.5%
Age 65+	19.2%	23.3%
Population density (km2) (2021)	1,604.4	346.8
Proportion of pop. in rural Output Areas	0.0%	23.9%
Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) (1 is the most deprived, 10 is the least deprived)		
Income	6	6
Employment	5	6
Skills	4	6
Health	4	6
Crime	6	6
Housing	3	5
Living env.	8	6

ECONOMIC

Measure	RBC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Economy		
Claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16-64 (2025)	3.9%	3.1%
Council tax base	27,004	37,521
Total rateable value of all businesses	£91,182,392	£89,659,654
GVA per hour	£32.3	£34.3
Gross median pay	£586.2	£588.6
Employmt. rate (16-64)	77.1%	79.4%
Economically active (16-64)	80.1%	81.2%
% pop - Level 3 skills	17.2%	17.0%
% pop - Level 4 skills	25.9%	32.3%
Estimated % of jobs earning below Living Wage Foundation rates	14.0%	16.7%
% of residents who travel less than 10km to work	42.7%	33.8%
% of residents who travel more than 10km to work	19.8%	23.0%
Housing target	489	663
5 year housing land supply (years)	2.8	3.3
Employment land (ha)*	55	70.9

*Required employment land as set out in each area's Local Plan or Demand Study

Place profile - Worcester City Council

DEMOGRAPHIC

Measure	WCC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Demographics		
Area (km2)	33	1,741
Population (2023)	105,143	614,185
Pop. forecast (2032)	106,090	646,150
Age 0-15	17.4%	17.2%
Age 16-64	64.4%	59.5%
Age 65+	18.2%	23.3%
Population density (km2) (2021)	3,121.4	346.8
Proportion of pop. in rural Output Areas	0.0%	23.9%
Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) (1 is the most deprived, 10 is the least deprived)		
Income	6	6
Employment	6	6
Skills	6	6
Health	5	6
Crime	6	6
Housing	6	5
Living env.	5	6

ECONOMIC

Measure	MHDC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Economy		
Claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16-64 (2025)	3.7%	3.1%
Council tax base	36,798	37,521
Total rateable value of all businesses	£107,386,408	£89,659,654
GVA per hour	£36.6	£34.3
Gross median pay	£606.8	£588.6
Employmt. rate (16-64)	81.8%	79.4%
Economically active (16-64)	83.8%	81.2%
% pop - Level 3 skills	18.3%	17.0%
% pop - Level 4 skills	33.7%	32.3%
Estimated % of jobs earning below Living Wage Foundation rates	13.9%	16.7%
% of residents who travel less than 10km to work	41.9%	33.8%
% of residents who travel more than 10km to work	18.5%	23.0%
Housing target	559	663
5 year housing land supply (years)	2.37	3.3
Employment land (ha)*	32.2	70.9

*Required employment land as set out in each area's Local Plan or Demand Study

Place profile - Wychavon District Council

DEMOGRAPHIC

Measure	WDC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Demographics		
Area (km2)	664	1,741
Population (2023)	136,229	614,185
Pop. forecast (2032)	151,343	646,150
Age 0-15	16.4%	17.2%
Age 16-64	58.2%	59.5%
Age 65+	25.4%	23.3%
Population density (km2) (2021)	199.7	346.8
Proportion of pop. in rural Output Areas	49.5%	23.9%
Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) (1 is the most deprived, 10 is the least deprived)		
Income	7	6
Employment	7	6
Skills	6	6
Health	8	6
Crime	7	6
Housing	4	5
Living env.	5	6

ECONOMIC

Measure	WDC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Economy		
Claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16-64 (2025)	2.7%	3.1%
Council tax base	53,767	37,521
Total rateable value of all businesses	£138,269,434	£89,659,654
GVA per hour	£35.8	£34.3
Gross median pay	£580.0	£588.6
Employmt. rate (16-64)	73.7%	79.4%
Economically active (16-64)	76.2%	81.2%
% pop - Level 3 skills	16.6%	17.0%
% pop - Level 4 skills	33%	32.3%
Estimated % of jobs earning below Living Wage Foundation rates	16.8%	16.7%
% of residents who travel less than 10km to work	29.2%	33.8%
% of residents who travel more than 10km to work	25.9%	23.0%
Housing target	976	663
5 year housing land supply (years)	1.1	3.3
Employment land (ha)*	217.3	70.9

*Required employment land as set out in each area's Local Plan or Demand Study

Place profile - Wyre Forest District Council

DEMOGRAPHIC

Measure	WFDC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Demographics		
Area (km2)	195	1,741
Population (2023)	103,253	614,185
Pop. forecast (2032)	104,735	646,150
Age 0-15	16.4%	17.2%
Age 16-64	58.2%	59.5%
Age 65+	25.4%	23.3%
Population density (km2) (2021)	520	346.8
Proportion of pop. in rural Output Areas	23.3%	23.9%
Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) (1 is the most deprived, 10 is the least deprived)		
Income	6	6
Employment	5	6
Skills	5	6
Health	6	6
Crime	5	6
Housing	5	5
Living env.	5	6

ECONOMIC

Measure	WFDC (Above / equal to / below county average)	Worcestershire average
Economy		
Claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16-64 (2025)	3.3%	3.1%
Council tax base	35,338	37,521
Total rateable value of all businesses	£79,993,291	£89,659,654
GVA per hour	£25.2	£34.3
Gross median pay	£583.7	£588.6
Employmt. rate (16-64)	86.3%	79.4%
Economically active (16-64)	87.6%	81.2%
% pop - Level 3 skills	17.0%	17.0%
% pop - Level 4 skills	26.1%	32.3%
Estimated % of jobs earning below Living Wage Foundation rates	19.3%	16.7%
% of residents who travel less than 10km to work	36.0%	33.8%
% of residents who travel more than 10km to work	24.5%	23.0%
Housing target	590	663
5 year housing land supply (years)	9.28	3.3
Employment land (ha)*	29.0	70.9

*Required employment land as set out in each area's Local Plan or Demand Study

Appendix C

Place analysis



Sectoral analysis

County-wide economy

Worcestershire boasts a diverse and resilient economy which is made up of a network of primarily micro businesses (representing 77% of all Worcestershire businesses). The economy does not rely on a key single sector or employer dominance, making the county more resilient to economic shocks.

Rural areas make up 86% of Worcestershire, housing 27% of the population and contributing to 30% of jobs. Agri-tech and construction jobs are particularly prominent in these more rural areas. The county has seen business growth in professional services but a decline in the total number enterprises since 2022, particularly in transport and storage. Specific challenges identified by the LEP include skills shortages, which are hampering economic development and growth.

The Local Economic Partnership has identified key cornerstone and opportunity sectors that govern the county's economy. These sectors, which represent large volumes of jobs across the county, include professional services, construction, and health care. Key opportunity sectors which have significant potential for high-value growth across the county have been identified as advanced manufacturing, cyber security, IT and defence, and horti/agricultural technology.

Tourism has also been identified as a key sector for Worcestershire which is worth nearly £690m per year to the Worcestershire economy.

Bromsgrove

Bromsgrove is a hub for business and professional services, with a particular strength in financial and insurance services, health, and business administration and support services.

The district has seen a healthy employment growth of 7.9% between December 2022 and December 2023 with around 52,900 residents in employment. Key employers include the NHS, AFH Independent Financial Services, and Selco Trade Centres.

Malvern Hills

Malvern Hills has a diverse local economy with key specialism including tech and cyber. It is home to the Malvern Hills Science Park where a cluster of cyber and technology-led businesses are based. The district benefits from a strong presence of high-tech SMEs, particularly in defence, electronics, and software development, supported by collaborations with QinetiQ and the UK Cyber Security Centre.

Other key sectors for the district include manufacturing and engineering, the health economy, education, and tourism, with the Malvern Hills National Landscapes supporting a vibrant hospitality and tourism economy locally.

Sectoral analysis

Redditch

Redditch's local economy is dominated by manufacturing and engineering and is a hub for advanced manufacturing and business services. Redditch has three times the national average regarding employment in the manufacturing sector, with levels of employment remaining strong in the sector whilst simultaneously declining nationally.

Key local employers include Mettis Aerospace (a leader in precision forging for aerospace) and Johnsons Cars. Other key sectors in the local economy include Health and Retail.

Whilst the local economy is dominated by micro businesses, Redditch does have a slightly larger share of small and medium-sized enterprises compared to other districts across Worcestershire due to its industrial base.

Worcester

Worcester City is the primary city economy in Worcestershire. The LEP identifies the city as having a strong manufacturing base with key opportunities for growth in the health and care and professional services sectors.

The city's economy has a strong existing presence in healthcare, driven by the Worcester Royal Hospital and a growing care sector. Education is another key sector in Worcester as it is a regional hub which is home to the University of Worcester, several colleges and schools. Retail is also a key sector, with the city centre acting as a shopping and leisure destination for the south of the county.

Wychavon

Wychavon, as a primarily rural district, is home to a large number of small and micro businesses that operate remotely across a wide breadth of sectors. Key sectors include Agriculture, Food Production and Agri-Tech, being home to major food producers such as Evesham Vale Growers. Logistics and Distribution is a key sector due to Wychavon's strategic location near the M5 corridor and proximity to Birmingham, making it attractive for distribution and logistics firms.

Manufacturing and engineering is also a key sector, with the district supporting light and advanced manufacturing in flooring, machinery and packaging. Key employers include Karndean Designflooring and Gtech, which are both headquartered in Wychavon. Tourism and Hospitality are further key sectors within the district.

Wyre Forest

Wyre Forest, centred around Kidderminster, is identified by the LEP as a hub for advanced manufacturing and business services. Key sectors include Health and Social Care, driven by the presence of Kidderminster Hospital. Retail is also a key sector, centred around Kidderminster, which is being revitalised through the ReWyre regeneration programme.

Manufacturing and engineering is also a strong sector locally, with Wyre Forest having a sizeable base in light manufacturing, including carpets, textiles and metal fabrication. Key employers include Victoria Carpets and a range of micro and small businesses based on industrial estates in Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn.

However, Wyre Forest has historically been among the lowest-ranked areas in the UK for GVA, particularly when measured per capita.

Housing

County wide approach to housing

Worcestershire County Council does not produce a Local Plan. Housing planning and delivery responsibilities lie with the district and borough councils within the county.

Worcestershire does not form a self-contained housing market area. Bromsgrove and Redditch are part of the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area, whilst Wychavon, Malvern Hills and Worcester City represent the South Worcestershire Housing Market Area.

The county's long-term vision for housing is guided by the Worcestershire Housing Strategy 2023–2040, which sets out a vision for housing delivery that supports economic growth, health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability. The strategy emphasises the need to deliver affordable, energy-efficient homes while also preserving the distinct character of Worcestershire's towns, villages, and landscapes.

Local Plans are developed at the sub-county level, governing housing delivery locally:

- Wychavon, Worcester City and Malvern Hills share a Local Plan (the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP)), which governs housing delivery across the south of the county.
- Whilst Bromsgrove and Redditch have their own Local Plans, they share strategic housing functions and collaborate on housing delivery.

North Worcestershire

Bromsgrove

Bromsgrove faces challenges in maintaining its five-year housing land supply, triggering the 'tilted balance' in planning decisions and prompting an early Local Plan review. The district supports Redditch by accommodating 3,400 homes and contributes to Birmingham's unmet housing need through developments such as the 700-home scheme at Longbridge.

Much of the district is constrained by the Green Belt, however, with a lack of brownfield land coming forward locally, some Green Belt land will be required to be developed to meet housing need. Future growth will be shaped by ongoing green belt and Local Plan reviews, particularly in response to regional housing pressures.

Redditch

Redditch is the only district in Worcestershire that retains its own council-owned housing stock, providing social housing for residents. The council also develops its own sites for housing delivery through its housing growth programme. Despite this, the borough is unable to meet its full housing need within its boundaries and currently has only 2.8 years of deliverable housing land, well below the required five-year supply. To address this shortfall, 3,400 homes have been allocated in neighbouring Bromsgrove, helping Redditch work toward its overall target of 6,400 homes between 2011-2030.

Housing

With an urban profile, Redditch focuses on regeneration, brownfield redevelopment, and town centre renewal, guided by the Local Plan No.4. The borough prioritises affordable housing and infrastructure-led growth, supported by strategic partnerships and planning policy.

Wyre Forest

Wyre Forest plans to deliver 5,520 new homes between 2016 and 2036, as set out in its Local Plan. The district aims to deliver a mix of housing types and sizes to meet local needs, with a minimum annual target of 276 dwellings, including 90 affordable homes per year.

Housing delivery is closely linked to the regeneration of Kidderminster (ReWyre) and surrounding areas, with a focus on sustainable development, community-led schemes, and town centre regeneration.

Wyre Forest is also the only district within Worcestershire with a housing land supply that exceeds the 5-year target. The district has exceeded its housing delivery target between 2020-2023, meaning that it can demonstrate a housing land supply of 9.3 years.

South Worcestershire

Malvern Hills

Malvern Hills faces challenges in delivering affordable housing due to land constraints and high property values, particularly in its more rural areas. The district also faces a challenge of disproportionately low levels of private rental accommodation which drives up demand. The district supports housing delivery through community-led housing and exception site policies, though there is a challenge in securing Registered Providers to deliver smaller sites or sites in more rural areas.

The January 2025 Addendum to the South Worcestershire Councils' (SWDP) Five Year Housing Land Supply Report confirms that none of the South Worcestershire Councils can currently demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, with Malvern Hills having a supply of 2.06 years.

The refreshed South Worcestershire Local Plan is due to be published in Spring 2026, which will evidence a supply of housing and employment land over the period of the Plan.

Worcester

Worcester City faces significant land constraints within its administrative boundary, relying heavily on urban extensions to meet housing and employment needs. The city experiences high and growing demand for affordable housing and a range of housing types to accommodate families, driven by population growth and limited development space.

Housing

The Housing Enabling Strategy and Delivery Plan 2023–2026 outlines a coordinated approach to increasing supply through brownfield redevelopment, urban expansion, and partnerships with registered providers, with a focus on delivering mixed-tenure and repurposed housing to meet diverse needs.

Though the January 2025 Addendum to the South Worcestershire Councils' (SWDP) Five Year Housing Land Supply Report notes that Worcester City has the highest supply of the three areas, at 2.37 years.

Wychavon

Wychavon operates under the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) and has identified strategic major growth areas for housing development, including Worcestershire Parkway and Throckmorton.

Wychavon faces a challenge in balancing its rural character with the need for affordable and family housing. The district is actively seeking to address this local challenge through seeking approval to build its first homes in decades, as part of a groundbreaking £4.5 million development with Rooftop Housing Group on land they own at Laurels Avenue in Offenham.

Despite this investment, the January 2025 Addendum to the South Worcestershire Councils' (SWDP) Five Year Housing Land Supply Report identifies that Wychavon has a very constrained supply of 1.10 years.

Employment sites

County wide approach to employment sites

As Worcestershire County Council does not produce a Local Plan, employment land delivery responsibilities are held by the district and borough councils within the county.

The LEP's Worcestershire Plan for Growth 2020-2040 sets out a county-wide ambition to deliver 20,000 new homes and 25,000 jobs, supported by strategic employment land allocations.

The LEP currently plays a central role in identifying and promoting key employment sites, particularly those linked to infrastructure investments.

Despite this, the GJS Dillon Worcestershire Commercial Property Market Report 2024 reported that across the county, key employment land is being lost to residential development.

Bromsgrove

Bromsgrove's employment land strategy is shaped by green belt constraints, but the district delivers employment space through strategic employment sites such as Bromsgrove Enterprise Park and Aston Fields.

Bromsgrove also provides employment land for Redditch, highlighting the strong cross-boundary planning efforts that occur across the north of the county.

The Local Plan Review is exploring land allocations to support business growth and inward investment, particularly in areas with strong transport links.

Malvern Hills

Employment land is allocated through the SWDP, with delivery focused on Malvern, Tenbury Wells, and Upton-upon-Severn. Key sites include Malvern Hills Science Park, Enigma Business Park, and Tenbury Wells Business Park. Whilst these employment sites provide for larger employers in the technology sector, a lack of smaller units (between 5-10k sq ft) has been recognised as a constraint to economic growth.

The district is also directly investing in employment land delivery at Malvern Hills Science Park.

Redditch

Redditch is unable to meet employment needs within its administrative boundary due to land constraints. The district therefore collaborates with neighbouring Local Authorities to identify land which is capable of accommodating Redditch's land supply shortfall, including Stratford-on-Avon and Bromsgrove.

Key employment areas within the district include Ravensbank Business Park, North Moons Moat, and Washford Industrial Estate, which provide space for businesses in the advanced manufacturing, logistics, and business services sectors.

The Eastern Gateway site, shared with Stratford-on-Avon, is a major strategic allocation progressing to meet regional employment needs.

Employment sites

Worcester City

Worcester has limited capacity for large-scale employment land due to constraints on land availability and therefore has a shortfall of delivery against its target in the SWDP. Worcester does however collaborate on employment land delivery with Wychavon at the Worcester Six site.

The council pursues delivering employment land through regeneration-led delivery at Shrub Hill and the Canal Quarter. These sites are delivering mixed-use space, though overall employment land delivery is constrained. The city relies on urban extensions and cross-boundary sites to meet demand.

Wychavon

Wychavon has demonstrated strong performance in delivering employment land within the district. The district has some of the largest employment land allocations in the county and actively collaborates with other districts in the SWDP for employment land delivery.

Key allocations include Worcestershire Parkway, Throckmorton New Settlement, and Vale Park in Evesham, supported by infrastructure investment and planning consents. The district has also directly invested in employment land delivery at Vale Park.

Sites are designed to deliver employment-led growth, with strong transport connectivity and capacity for logistics, advanced manufacturing, and office space.

Wyre Forest

Wyre Forest's Local Plan (2016 – 2036) allocates 29 hectares of employment land, primarily around Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn. The district aims to support a mix of employment types, including light industrial, logistics, and office space.

Wyre Forest is delivering its employment land allocation through sites like Lea Castle Village and mixed-use regeneration in Kidderminster. The district is on track to meet Local Plan targets by balancing town centre regeneration with new employment zones.

Transport

Regional approach to transport

Transport in Worcestershire is primarily the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council. The council oversees a wide range of transport-related services including public transport planning, road maintenance and improvement projects, sustainable and active travel initiatives and transport planning and strategy (including the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan).

The Local Transport Plan sets out the long-term vision for reducing congestion, improving access to key economic centres, and promoting sustainable travel, ensuring that transport infrastructure aligns with housing and employment growth whilst also supporting shared environmental goals.

Strategic infrastructure projects play a central role in this delivery, including major schemes such as the development of Worcestershire Parkway Station, which aims to improve regional connectivity whilst simultaneously unlocking new housing and employment land.

Public transport is also a key county priority. The Worcestershire Bus Service Improvement Plan and the Rail Investment Strategy aim to modernise services, improve station facilities, and promote low-carbon travel options. These initiatives are designed to make public transport more reliable, accessible, and attractive to residents and visitors alike.

Each district also benefits from tailored transport investment that reflects specific needs and geography.

Bromsgrove

Strategic transport investment in Bromsgrove focuses on managing congestion and improving connectivity to the West Midlands conurbation through key investments of highway upgrades and improvements to Bromsgrove Railway Station.

A major investment program (A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme), led by Worcestershire County Council, focuses on improving the A38 between M5 Junction 4 and Hanbury Turn and aims to reduce congestion, support economic growth, and provide improvements for pedestrians, cyclists, and bus infrastructure.

Malvern Hills

Malvern Hills faces unique challenges due to its rural geography and environmental constraints, which impact transport investment decisions locally.

Transport investment aims to support rural accessibility, with a focus on community transport, bus service enhancements and rail connectivity to Worcester and Hereford. The district also actively promotes walking and cycling through its Active Travel Strategy, which supports healthier, low-carbon transport options and aims to reduce car dependency in smaller settlements.

Transport

Redditch

Redditch is located on major corridors (A435, A441, A448, M42) and is investing in station improvements, bus infrastructure, and active travel routes to support its urban regeneration goals. The borough's draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) outlines a long-term strategy to improve walking, cycling, and wheeling routes across the borough through cycle network enhancements and walking and wheeling routes.

The Eastern Gateway development also includes transport upgrades to support employment growth.

Worcester City

Worcester is a key focus for transport investment due to its role as the county's urban and economic centre which has some strain on its local transport network as evidenced by the transport modelling undertaken as part of the SWDP review.

Major projects include the Southern Link Road dualling (A4440) and the Broomhall Way Footbridge, both aimed at easing congestion and improving east-west connectivity.

The city also benefits from regeneration-led transport upgrades at Shrub Hill and the Canal Quarter, integrating rail, bus, and active travel. However, land constraints and high traffic volumes continue to pose challenges, requiring ongoing investment in sustainable transport modes.

The Worcester City Centre Transport Strategy (2023) aims to improve the city's transport system by reducing car dependence and promoting sustainable travel options, with a focus on four key areas: Cornmarket, Foregate Street North, Copenhagen Street and Riverside. However, whilst this strategy was highlighted in LTP4, it failed to be acknowledged by the previous county administration.

Wychavon

Wychavon's transport priorities focus on improving access to local transport and improving links between places, focusing on strategic growth areas such as Worcestershire Parkway and Throckmorton New Settlement. Strategic investment is focused on improving rail access, rural mobility, and road infrastructure to support housing and employment growth.

The district's strategy focuses on increasing the range of community-based transport options available across the district, including the Worcestershire On Demand pilot.

Wyre Forest

Wyre Forest's transport investment centres on the regeneration of Kidderminster town centre, including improvements to public realm, bus access, and walking and cycling routes.

The district also benefits from infrastructure upgrades linked to the Lea Castle Village development and the Stourport Road Corridor, supporting both housing and employment delivery.

Live and work patterns

County wide patterns

Worcestershire is characterised by a commuter-based economy, with significant daily flows of residents travelling both within and outside the county for work. Data from the 2021 Census shows that 23% of residents across the county travel more than 10km to work, which is larger than the national average of 18.7%.

There are estimated to be nearly 22,000 more working residents than there are jobs in the county, meaning the county is a net out commuter of labour. Workplace earnings in Worcestershire are lower than resident earnings, particularly in Bromsgrove, resulting in out-commuting to higher wage areas such as the Birmingham conurbation. Within the county, Worcester City and Redditch act as employment hubs, attracting workers from surrounding rural areas.

Initiatives such as town centre regeneration, local employment land delivery, and transport investment aim to retain more economic activity within Worcestershire by encouraging more residents to live and work locally.

Bromsgrove

Bromsgrove has the highest level of out-commuting in the county, with around 68% of residents leaving the borough for work, primarily to Birmingham and Solihull. The district's rail and road links make it a popular commuter base to the West Midlands, with limited travel to the south of Worcestershire due to a lack of public transport infrastructure.

While local employment exists in business services and light industries, the high proportion of workers commuting out of the district suggests that a significant proportion of the income earned is spent outside the district.

Malvern Hills

Malvern Hills is largely rural, with a correspondingly large proportion of the population commuting out of the area for work (approximately 55%), with many residents commuting to Worcester, Hereford, and Birmingham.

The district does, however, support a niche local economy in technology and defence, centred around the Malvern Hills Science Park which does attract workers from neighbouring areas.

Redditch

Data from the 2021 Census shows that approximately 47% of residents in Redditch commute out of the borough to work. Redditch's location on the edge of the Birmingham conurbation and role as a commuter town means that a large proportion of those who commute out of the area to work do so to Birmingham.

A significant proportion of residents who work within the borough do so in key local sectors of manufacturing, retail, and public services. The town's regeneration efforts aim to retain more economic activity, but income leakage remains a challenge due to proximity to larger urban centres.

Live and work patterns

Worcester City

Worcester functions as a key employment centre within the county, drawing in commuters from surrounding southern districts such as Wychavon and Malvern Hills. Many residents also work locally, with approximately 56% of residents working in the city in key sectors such as public services, retail, and education. The city's compact geography and transport links support a high level of local economic activity.

Wychavon

Wychavon has a strong commuter profile, with approximately 52% of residents commuting out of the district for work, typically to Worcester, Birmingham, and Cheltenham. While the district has a growing employment base in logistics and agri-tech, a significant share of income earned by residents is spent outside the district, reflecting its role as a residential base for professionals working in nearby urban centres.

Wyre Forest

Wyre Forest, centred around Kidderminster, has a mixed live-work pattern. While many residents work locally in retail, healthcare, and manufacturing, approximately 47% of residents commute out of the district to work, primarily to Wychavon, Birmingham, Worcester, and Dudley.

Local identity, culture and heritage

Culture and heritage

Worcestershire is shaped by its rich historical legacy and diverse geography; encompassing market towns, rural villages, and urban centres that reflect centuries of cultural development. Its deep historical identity is rooted in the area's pivotal role during the English Civil War, and this legacy is preserved in numerous listed buildings, heritage sites, and museums.

The county's cultural landscape is further enriched by the natural beauty of the Malvern Hills, designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the artistic legacy of Sir Edward Elgar. These elements continue to inspire a strong sense of place and pride among local communities within the county.

Worcestershire's identity is actively celebrated and promoted through strategic partnerships such as Museums Worcestershire and Visit Worcestershire, which showcase the county's historic architecture, cultural events, and natural attractions. Museums such as the Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, Bewdley Museum, and the Forge Mill Needle Museum offer experiences that enable visitors and residents alike to connect to Worcestershire's industrial, artistic, and rural heritage.

Across the county, there is a shared commitment to preserving Worcestershire's historic character and community values, particularly through place-sensitive housing development and regeneration initiatives.

Local identity

The 'Shape Worcestershire' public engagement exercise (June 2025) highlighted differing views regarding local identity. Two main cohorts of respondents were highlighted:

Preservation of Worcestershire's identity - 20.3% of respondents identified the single unitary option (option A) as best supporting local identity. A thematic analysis of responses identified:

- A strong emotional and practical support for retaining the county as a whole.
- References to Worcestershire's historical and cultural coherence.
- A desire for "One Worcestershire" as a way of avoiding unnecessary geographic or administrative splits.
- A reflection of how most residents already see themselves - as part of "Worcestershire," not as "North" or "South".

Preservation of local identity, local knowledge and localism - An alternative view was provided by 45.7% of respondents who identified a two unitary model (option B) as best supporting local identity. A thematic analysis of responses identified the following main reasons for their position:

- Respondents value local identity, local knowledge and community character, which they see as being a strength of a two unitary model. Some fear that this might be eroded in a large one unitary.
- Some responses stress the importance of decision-makers having direct knowledge of local communities, including living in those

Local identity, culture and heritage

communities, which they believe will be stronger in a two unitary model.

- A two-council model is seen as maintaining local pride and cohesion better than a centralised, “one-size-fits-all” model.

This diversity of views is informed by the local characteristics of the cities, towns and rural communities that make up Worcestershire:

Bromsgrove

Bromsgrove’s culture and heritage are influenced by both its location in Worcestershire and its proximity to Birmingham. It is an area with significant industrial heritage, particularly in nail-making and engineering.

The council’s Leisure and Culture Strategy integrates parks, arts, sports, and events into a cohesive vision for community wellbeing, and its Playing Pitch Strategy includes priorities of upgrading sports pitches, supporting local clubs, and enhancing cultural venues to meet growing demand.

Malvern Hills

The district contains the Malvern Hills, which are nationally recognised for their natural beauty and cultural significance. The district’s identity is also closely tied to its spa town history and landscape conservation efforts, supported by local and county heritage services.

The Council’s vision includes a commitment to create a local vibrant culture and arts community that delivers social, economic and health

benefits for residents through improving assets such as Malvern Theatres and supporting community-led arts and culture across the district.

Redditch

Historically a centre for needle manufacturing, Redditch’s industrial legacy is preserved through museums and cultural initiatives. The borough’s diverse population, green spaces and key locations like the Palace Theatre contribute to its evolving identity.

Redditch’s Leisure and Culture Strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to sport, arts, and open spaces, with a focus on health, inclusion, and regeneration. The Built Facility Strategy also includes cultural development as a priority, focusing on arts access and community engagement.

Worcester

Worcester’s identity is rooted in over 2,000 years of history, with landmarks like the Cathedral, the Commandery, and the site of the final Civil War battle reflecting its rich heritage. The city is a hub for education, with a student population of over 10,000 and institutions including the University of Worcester. Its cultural life is seen through museums, which celebrate a range of local history and Royal Worcester porcelain.

The City Plan 2025-30 and draft Arts and Culture Strategy highlight ambitions to be a “city of festivals,” with events such as the Worcester Festival and

Local identity, culture and heritage

Three Choirs Festival drawing national attention. Worcester City Council also supports community sport, including football clubs and the new International Hockey Centre.

Wychavon

Known for its agricultural heritage and market towns, Wychavon celebrates local produce through events such as the Pershore Plum Festival and Evesham's asparagus celebrations.

These traditions are supported by community-led initiatives and council-backed cultural programming, which includes celebrating local residents through Wychavon Community Stars and previously hosting an annual Village of Culture competition.

Wychavon have also historically invested significantly in community infrastructure and facilities, including Number 8, The Regal and new community halls.

Wyre Forest

Wyre Forest is distinguished by its rich and varied heritage, encompassing Kidderminster's renowned carpet manufacturing industry, the mix of medieval and Georgian architecture of Bewdley, and the historic canal networks of Stourport-on-Severn, alongside the historical Wyre Forest itself.

This cultural legacy is preserved and celebrated through dedicated institutions such as Bewdley Museum, the Museum of Carpet in Kidderminster, and the Stourport Heritage Rooms. The varied identities across the district reflect the rich blend of industrial and architectural heritage locally, which is supported by local tourism and conservation efforts.

Existing public sector collaboration

County wide strategic partnerships

Worcestershire benefits from a well-established network of county-wide strategic partnerships that enable coordinated action across a range of key public service areas.

Leisure, culture and the economy

In the areas of leisure, culture, and the local economy, organisations such as Museums Worcestershire, Visit Worcestershire, and the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership work collaboratively to promote the county's cultural heritage, attract tourism, and drive economic development.

In the field of health and wellbeing, the Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board and the Integrated Care Board Assembly bring together health services, local authorities, and community organisations to improve population health and deliver more integrated, person-centred care.

Community safety is supported through partnerships such as the West Mercia Local Resilience Forum and the Safer Communities Board, which coordinate efforts in emergency planning, crime prevention, and public protection across the county.

Additionally, several service delivery partnerships—including the Strategic Waste Board, Lead Local Flood Response, and the Worcestershire Housing Board—ensure effective collaboration across the district level geography.

Strategic partnerships between District Councils

County-wide strategic partnerships are complemented by district-level strategic partnerships which often reflect a natural division between the northern and southern areas of Worcestershire.

There are two separate shared leadership functions which exist between neighbouring districts within the county:

- Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council share a Chief Executive, Deputy, Executive Director and seven joint Heads of Service.
- Malvern Hills District Council and Wychavon District Council share a Chief Executive and leadership team, as well as HR, legal, housing, planning, community safety and emergency planning services.

Strategic partnerships between districts also occur within community safety, with two separate Community Safety Partnerships existing beneath the Safer Communities Board (North Worcestershire (Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest councils) and South Worcestershire (Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon councils).

There is a further strategic partnership between Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon through the South Worcestershire Development Plan, which sets out the spatial ambitions for the south of the county.

Existing public sector collaboration

Shared services

In addition to its strategic partnerships, Worcestershire benefits from a range of shared service arrangements that enhance efficiency and collaboration across the county.

County-wide shared services

Several services operate at a county-wide level:

- All district councils participate in Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), a joint committee model hosted by Bromsgrove District Council. WRS delivers key regulatory functions including environmental health, licensing, and trading standards.
- The Worcestershire Growth Hub is jointly funded by the county council and all district councils, supporting business development and economic growth.
- Worcestershire County Council is responsible for waste disposal and shares this service with Herefordshire Council, extending collaboration beyond the county boundary.

Shared services between district councils

District councils across Worcestershire also engage in shared service arrangements at varying scales. The Internal Audit Partnership includes all districts except Wyre Forest, providing coordinated internal audit functions.

Several services in Worcestershire are shared between neighbouring districts, reflecting the county's north–south division.

In North Worcestershire, the councils of Bromsgrove, Redditch, and Wyre Forest collaborate on a range of services, including:

- Emergency Planning North (Applied Resilience)
- Water Management
- Land Drainage
- Building Control

Redditch and Bromsgrove also share all council services except for Redditch's housing stock and associated Housing Revenue Account, which remains independently managed.

In South Worcestershire, Malvern Hills, Worcester City, and Wychavon councils jointly deliver services, including:

- Procurement
- ICT
- Building Control
- Land Drainage
- Revenues and Benefits

Additionally, Malvern Hills and Worcester City share a creditors and debtors service. These shared arrangements enhance service efficiency and consistency across the county, while allowing for tailored delivery at the local level.

Existing public sector collaboration

District council services delivered through contractual arrangements

In addition to formal shared service arrangements, several services across Worcestershire are delivered through contractual agreements between the county and district councils.

Parking services are a key example of this, with collaborative contractual arrangements varying across the county. For example, Wychavon District Council provides parking services on behalf of Redditch and Bromsgrove (in addition to other councils), demonstrating joint working between councils across the north and south of the county.

The county council also commissions services from districts in areas such as the Starting Well Partnership and the development of Family Hubs, enabling local delivery of early help and family support services through established district-level infrastructure.

Existing community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment structures

County wide

Significant community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment structures already are in place across the county:

Town and Parish Councils

Worcestershire benefits from a network of 180 Town and Parish Councils who are represented by Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils (CALC). These Town and Parish Councils support their communities, businesses, and local voluntary groups to maintain and champion the special characteristics of their localities.

Partnerships with local community, voluntary and charitable organisations

A range of voluntary and community sector (VCS) infrastructure organisations exists across the county to strengthen and support the sector. Key partners include the Worcestershire VCSE Alliance, the Worcestershire Community Action Network (WeCAN), and the Worcestershire Advice Network.

At the county level, several VCS-led partnerships focus on health and wellbeing, and on children and young people. These include the Health and Wellbeing Board, and its sub-groups—the Being Well Strategic Group and the Children and Young People Strategic Group—as well as an active Schools Forum.

The county's commitment to community-led innovation is exemplified by its role in the We Are Westlands project, which aims to reduce health inequalities through local collaboration and recently received national recognition with an LGC Award.

The Worcestershire VCSE Alliance, supported by Worcestershire County Council, plays a central role in helping local VCS organisations engage with the Integrated Care System (ICS). Its goal is to improve health and wellbeing outcomes through stronger cross-sector collaboration. Each district hosts a District Collaborative, which brings together local partners from the community, health, and education sectors to set shared priorities.

WeCAN provides infrastructure support to small charities and grassroots organisations, helping with fundraising, governance, and volunteer coordination. Meanwhile, the Worcestershire Advice Network delivers free, confidential, and accessible advice to residents on issues such as housing, benefits, debt, and legal matters, with funding and commissioning support from the County Council.

Existing community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment structures

Community Safety

The Safer Communities Board oversees two Safer Community Partnerships (SCP), North Worcestershire and South Worcestershire, who work toward addressing the four strategic priority areas across Worcestershire: reducing re-offending, harm reduction, domestic and sexual abuse, and drugs and alcohol.

District based operational groups support the delivery of the SCP's priorities at a local level.

At a District Council level, the following arrangements are in place:

Bromsgrove

Bromsgrove has 19 Parish and Town Councils that represent their communities' voices locally and set priorities through Neighbourhood Plans. These Parish and Town Councils form part of the Bromsgrove and Redditch County Association of Local Councils (CALC).

Bromsgrove also convenes the Bromsgrove Partnership, which is a local strategic partnership and district collaborative that has a Strategic Board and themed sub-groups. This sits below the county VCS Alliance and sets priorities in partnership with a range of local stakeholders. Key themes for the Partnership include creating a better environment, ensuring residents can age well, and improving community wellbeing.

Bromsgrove forms part of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership.

Malvern Hills

Malvern Hills has a network of 53 Town and Parish Councils (including three Town Councils) representing their communities and forms part of the South Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership.

The Malvern Hills District Collaborative, which sits below the VCS Alliance at county level, sets local priorities in partnership with a range of local stakeholders. Malvern Hills have also published a Connected Communities Strategy 2021-2041, which clearly demonstrates the Council's commitment in supporting communities to become strong, resilient, and sustainable.

At a place-based level, Malvern Hills' focus on communities is governed by the South Worcestershire Development Plan and Neighbourhood Plans. The council's Connected Community Strategy forms part of a five-year plan commitment to 'develop and implement an asset-based community development strategy which supports the building of strong, resilient and sustainable communities'.

Redditch

Redditch has one Parish Council which forms part of the Bromsgrove and Redditch County Association of Local Councils (CALC).

Redditch also hosts a Community Wellbeing Partnership and the Redditch District Collaborative, which sits below the VCS Alliance and sets local priorities in partnership with a range of local stakeholders, including a significant number from the Primary Care Network.

Existing community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment structures

As a council that retains control of its own housing stock, Redditch is also developing a Tenant Participation Network to strengthen resident engagement. Uniquely within the county, Redditch has a Town Deal Board, which brings together representatives from public services, the voluntary and community sector, and the business community to guide local regeneration and investment.

Redditch forms part of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership.

Worcester City

Worcester City has two Town and Parish Councils.

The Worcester City District Collaborative, which sits below the VCS Alliance, meets quarterly and includes representation from culture and leisure partners (Museums Worcestershire and Freedom Leisure).

The Worcester City District Collaborative, which operates under the Worcestershire VCSE Alliance, meets quarterly and brings together partners from across sectors, including representatives from Museums Worcestershire and Freedom Leisure, reflecting the city's strong cultural and leisure presence.

The city is home to eight community centres, which serve as key hubs for local engagement and service delivery. Six of these centres are operated in partnership with Worcester Community Trust, which delivers a range of services and programmes from these sites.

Worcester City also works closely with the Voluntary Organisations of Worcester (VOW), a local network convened by Worcester Community Action. VOW brings together a wide range of voluntary and community sector organisations to share information, strengthen collaboration, and represent the sector in strategic discussions.

Worcester City forms part of the South Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership.

Wychavon

Wychavon is fully parished, with 70 Town and Parish Councils. As well as the Wychavon City District Collaborative which sits below the VCS Alliance, Wychavon has several VCS networks which cover the towns of Droitwich, Pershore and Evesham, as well as the surrounding rural areas. Furthermore, there is also a dedicated Children and Young Person's Network in operation.

Place-based communities and Town Officers support communities to develop across the area. The council also hosts a Communities and Funding Advisory Panel, Rural Matters Advisory Panel, and Town Centres Advisory Panel who provide their Executive Board with advice and policy development, representing the community voice.

Wychavon forms part of the South Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership.

Existing community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment structures

Wyre Forest

Wyre Forest has 12 Town Parish Councils, with several outlining their local priorities and spatial ambitions through Neighbourhood Plans.

The Wyre Forest District Collaborative, part of the Worcestershire VCSE Alliance structure, has a strong focus on improving health outcomes. It works closely with partners including the Primary Care Network and West Mercia Police, reflecting a joined-up approach to community wellbeing and safety.

In addition, the district hosts a monthly Multi-Agency Group, coordinated by Simply Limitless, which brings together a wide range of local organisations to foster collaboration and share intelligence. There is also a dedicated Children and Young People's Network, which supports joined-up working around youth services and safeguarding.

Wyre Forest forms part of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership.

Data sources

Section	Data sources
Place Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Census (2021)• ONS Population estimates - local authority based by single year of age (2024)• Population projections - local authority based by single year of age (2018)• ONS 2021 Rural Urban Classification (2021)• English Indices of Deprivation (2019)
Place Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ONS Claimant count by sex and age (2025)• ONS Subregional Productivity (June 2024)• Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2024)• Annual Population Survey (2025)• Census (2021)• Council tax base (provided by each authority, 2025)• Rateable value (provided by each authority, 2025)• Housing target (provided by each authority, 2025)• 5-year housing land supply (available from each council's website)• Employment land (provided by each authority, 2025)
Sectoral analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worcestershire Plan for Growth 2020–2040 (LEP)• Worcestershire's Employment Market Key Growth Sectors (Skills 4 Worcestershire)• Worcestershire's Employment and Labour Market Information (LMI) (Skills 4 Worcestershire)• ONS Labour Market profiles (2024)• ONS Local Indicators (2025)• ONS UK Business Counts (2024)

Data sources

Section	Data sources
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Plans (SWDP, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wyre Forest)• Housing Land Supply Reports• Planning Monitoring Reports
Employment Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worcestershire Plan for Growth 2020-2040 (LEP)• GJS Dillon Worcestershire Commercial Property Market Report 2024• Local Plans (SWDP, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wyre Forest)• Cross-boundary planning agreements
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4• Worcestershire Bus Service Improvement Plan• Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy• Worcester City Centre Transport Strategy (2023)• South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR)
Live and Work Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Census (2021)• Worcestershire Plan for Growth 2020–2040 (LEP)• Worcestershire County Economic Summary• ONS Nomis labour market profiles

Data sources

Section	Data sources
Local identity, culture and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ‘Shape Worcestershire’ public engagement exercise (June 2025)• Museums Worcestershire website• Visit Worcestershire website• Bromsgrove Leisure and Culture Strategy• Redditch Leisure and Culture Strategy• Redditch Built Facility Strategy• Worcester City Plan 2025-30• Worcester City draft Arts and Culture Strategy (2025)