



**Wyre Forest**  
District Council

**How are we doing ?** **Annual Report 2009/2010**



# contents

## Wyre Forest District Council Annual Report 2009/10

Introduction .....	Page 2
Our Aims & Priorities for 2009/10: .....	Page 3
More affordable housing .....	Page 4
Reducing waste to landfill & increasing recycling .....	Page 6
District-wide regenerations .....	Page 8
Improving efficiency & value for money .....	Page 10
Other Achievements .....	Page 12
Performance Summary	
Performance Indicators .....	Page 14
Inspections & Assessments.....	Page 16
Budget Summary .....	Page 18
Contact details .....	Page 19

## 2009/10 at Wyre Forest District Council

### introduction



**Ian Miller & Cllr. John-Paul Campion**  
Chief Executive & Leader



01562 732928



[strategy@wyreforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:strategy@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)



[www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk)



Chief Executive  
Civic Centre  
Stourport-on-Severn  
Worcestershire  
DY13 8UJ

We are pleased to introduce the annual report of Wyre Forest District Council for 2009-10.

The report demonstrates another year of achievement and improvement despite the challenging circumstances facing local government generally and the particular issues here in Wyre Forest. We have made good progress against the four priorities, with further affordable housing delivered with our partners; new arrangements being implemented for collecting garden waste and recycling; the launch of the exciting ReWyre prospectus for economic regeneration of Kidderminster; and significant savings from the work that we have done on efficiency. We have made great progress in our internal processes and structures and have concentrated throughout on securing benefit for the public who pay for and use our services.

We would like to pay tribute to the council's staff for their support and commitment through these uncertain times. None of the achievements in this report would have been possible without them. The future reductions in public expenditure mean that they will be called upon to identify even more changes and efficiencies as we strive, wherever, possible, to avoid cutting essential front-line services.

We are planning for the future, and we know tough decisions will have to be made over the coming months as we set our corporate priorities and budget for 2011 onwards. However, while we have to look ahead, staff and councillors alike are also getting on with the everyday business of the council – delivering the services that we know local people and businesses rely upon and value.

We hope that you will find this report useful. If you have any queries or would like to comment on the report, please contact us.

## Our Aims & Priorities

We have four Corporate Aims, which represent what we want to achieve for the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the District. Each Aim is delivered through a range of specific services, both statutory and non-statutory.

### Our Aims:

- A better quality of Life
- A sustainable environment
- A vibrant local economy
- A well run and responsive Council

These Aims are supported by our four Priorities for improvement. We have agreed these Priorities to help focus our activity and allocation of resources. The Priorities are supported by a set of targets which are used to measure progress.

### Our Priorities:

- More affordable housing
- Reducing waste to landfill and increasing recycling
- District-wide regeneration
- Improving efficiency and value for money

Details of these targets and progress achieved against them are shown on the next pages and Appendix.

priorities

75%  
2009/10  
Priorities  
Targets  
Completed

## More Affordable Housing

Corporate Plan Target	Progress
<p>To meet the Local Area Agreement 3 year total of affordable homes units:</p> <p>1175 (of which Wyre Forest District Council's anticipated contribution will be <b>250</b> by 2011) in conjunction with the Housing Association and Partners.</p>	<p><b>75</b> units were delivered in 2009/10 exceeding the annual local target of 66.</p> <p>Affordable units include 15 Homebuy at Franchise Street, 30 for rent at Wilton Avenue, 6 for rent at Oxford Street in Kidderminster.</p> <p>Total number of <b>174</b> affordable homes delivered since 2008/09.</p>

A new Forum has been set up to help keep Wyre Forest Landlords up to date with the latest changes in legislation, information on the Local Housing Allowance and to provide practical ways to reduce and mitigate potential tax liabilities. Landlords are also offered money saving advice and are able to find out about a new Accreditation Scheme which will give them access to funding to improve their properties. The Scheme for the private sector will help to raise standards and recognise good practice within the private rented market. 40 landlords attended the Forum.

Over 60s living in privately owned or privately rented homes in the Wyre Forest were offered free loft and cavity wall insulation through the 'Wyre 60' scheme. 449 residents benefited from the scheme which would reduce the total amount of energy bill costs by £74,515 and improve their living conditions as well as helping to reduce carbon emissions by 239 tonnes. The Council also supported 5 households to install solar panels through renewable energy grants.

Home energy surveys were sent to all households in the District with those completing the survey receiving a report detailing how they could make savings. The Council also facilitated a number of Energy Surgeries where 48 people received in depth advice on reducing their fuel bills.

We worked with other local councils to set up the Warmer Worcestershire website where all Wyre Forest residents can check the energy rating of their home at [www.warmerworcestershire.com](http://www.warmerworcestershire.com)

priorities

### Outcome

More affordable housing available giving local people better housing options that meet their needs and income



The Council assisted 253 households to improve housing conditions resulting in 70.6% of vulnerable households in Wyre Forest living in decent homes. We also helped 135 properties to make essential improvements or repairs and funded 252 disabled adaptations.

As part of our support for residents affected by flooding, we helped 19 properties to install flood defence measures.

Residents across the Wyre Forest district were asked for their opinions on key housing issues through an online survey. The survey was a joint initiative with all other local authorities across Worcestershire to help to develop the first ever countywide Housing Strategy. By developing a countywide strategy, housing issues are prioritised at the highest level and benefit from extra funding and partnership working.

The Council has worked with partners to set up a mortgage rescue scheme in Wyre Forest, which included a publicity campaign through local services and the local media. As part of the scheme, a specific money advice service is now run by the Citizens Advice Bureau at the Community Housing centre, in Oxford Street, Kidderminster. The Council send out information to households who are due to attend court for a repossession hearing. Since the launch of the scheme in May 2009, we have assisted 92 households and the first mortgage rescue through the Government's national initiative is due to complete in Summer 2010.

Wyre Forest District Council supported 309 households at threat of homelessness through the Communities and Local Government Homeless Prevention fund in 2009/10. This included providing support and advice to people with mental health issues, young people, people who suffered from domestic violence and people who were homeless but wanted to access the private rented sector and had no financial resource to do so.

The preventative work has contributed to the reduction in the number of homeless acceptances from 94 in 2008 to 62 in 2009. Consequently, the Council's spend on homelessness emergency accommodation has been reduced by £50,000 in 2009/10. The total spend in 2008/09 was £157,052 in comparison to £107,842 in 2009/10.

Over the year our Housing Services Team dealt with over 800 housing complaints and service enquiries.

**priorities**





# Reducing waste to landfill & increasing recycling

priorities

## Outcome

More opportunities for residents and visitors to recycle their waste and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.



Corporate Plan Target	Progress	
For the Council to reach agreement on the future collection arrangements for domestic refuse and recycling in Wyre Forest in accordance with the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Worcestershire by 1 October 2009.	<p>A review of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS), and the future collection arrangements for refuse &amp; recycling completed and recommendations made to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work towards the utilisation of a new EnviroSort facility.</li> <li>2. Adopt the revised JMWMS.</li> <li>3. Implement a co-mingled wheeled bin collection for recycling.</li> <li>4. Adopt an alternative weekly service for refuse &amp; recycling.</li> <li>5. Due to prohibitive costs, the Council is unable to support the implementation of a food waste collection service.</li> <li>6. The County be urged to review its decision to remove funding for Sink Waste Disposal Units.</li> <li>7. Implement a paid for Wheeled Bin Garden Waste Collection Service on a trial basis &amp; dependent upon interest.</li> </ol> <p>The proposals were endorsed at Full Council on 2 December 2009.</p>	
To commence new collection arrangements for refuse and recycling by 31 March 2010.	<p>Garden waste commenced on 5th April 2010. Recycling scheme planned for 5th July 2010.</p>	
	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Value
Residual waste per household	550 kg*	572 kg 
Household waste recycled	28.5 %	26.63 % ** 

\*Local target. Government target for 2009/10 was 584kgs set against 3 year milestones for years 2010, 2015 & 2020.

\*\*There has been a national decline in recycling rates due to the down turn in the economy.

# priorities



Wyre Forest District Council celebrated the achievement of recycling over 50,000 tonnes of rubbish since kerbside recycling was introduced in September 2003. Between 600 and 700 tonnes of rubbish a month is now recycled and not sent to landfill.

To make it even easier to recycle at Christmas, every household in the District was mailed in the middle of December with a postcard detailing the arrangements for refuse and recycling collections during the festive period.

The new environmentally friendly garden waste collection scheme was launched by Wyre Forest District Council in April 2010, with collections every fortnight up until the end of November. Collections will then begin again in March 2011. The service provides a hassle-free way of getting rid of garden waste, including grass cuttings, hedge and shrub clippings, weeds, cut flowers, leaves, twigs and bark. The garden waste will be taken for composting into a soil conditioner.

We continue to actively promote the Keep Britain Tidy, environmental campaign for schools within the District. The Eco-Schools Award scheme currently has over 30 Wyre Forest Schools registered.

We have been working closely with other district partners and with both Herefordshire and Worcestershire County Councils. This Partnership working has delivered the following:

- ❖ A joint strategy document signed by all parties.
- ❖ The opening of a new recycling facility to treat all county recycled waste
- ❖ An agreed way forward to drastically reduce waste to landfill by treating residual waste and producing energy in the process

# priorities

## Outcome

Clear direction for:


- rural regeneration in Wyre Forest
- Kidderminster Town Centre

## Outcome

More attractive environment and better information provided for visitors to Stourport-on-Severn

## District-wide regeneration

Corporate Plan Target	Progress
To agree the Rural Regeneration Strategy Action Plan by 31 August 2010	A European funding bid for rural Worcestershire was accepted and a Plan containing "Headline Actions" and areas of partnership working to support the adopted Rural Regeneration Strategy has been agreed.
Delivery of Stourport Pride Initiative - to complete the 'Better Welcome' Project by 31 March 2010	Better Welcome project completed including interpretation panels and pedestrian signage.
Kidderminster Town Centre Management - adopt a Kidderminster Town Centre Strategy by 31 January 2010.	<p>Town Centre Partnership workshop held and work was progressed through the Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus.</p> <p>Learning &amp; Skills Council Skill Smart Survey completed with very positive results for the town centre</p> <p>A draft Kidderminster Town Centre Strategy was accepted by Members in January 2010. Consultation on the draft strategy was undertaken and the final strategy is due to be reported to Cabinet July 2010.</p>

Indicator	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Value
No. of grants awarded to new businesses	20	31 

priorities



In September 2009 the **ReWyre** Initiative and the **Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus** document were officially launched. A meeting was held with a range of public sector regeneration agencies in Kidderminster including the Council, regional directors from Advantage West Midlands, the Homes and Communities Agency and British Waterways in the company of the MP for Wyre Forest and the Chair of the Wyre Forest Matters Local Strategic Partnership and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the public sector partners.

The **ReWyre** Initiative is all about partnership working and bringing together the public, private and voluntary sectors together with the wider community regenerate the area. Although the Initiative is primarily focused on Kidderminster it also considers the wider district as a whole. The principal aim is to promote and develop the exciting prospects of the District and make it an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest.

The **Prospectus** provides a blueprint for the regeneration of Kidderminster. It aims to highlight the town's challenges and opportunities to a wide audience from within and outside the area in order to attract support and investment to transform the fortunes of the town. It is an ambitious 30 year vision for the future containing projects and initiatives that will be delivered in the short, medium, and long term timescales. It provides a bigger, strategic picture for the town's development and looks to bring the right people together to make projects happen. On Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> June the inaugural meeting of the ReWyre Board took place and they are charged with driving forward the initiative.

Kidderminster was ranked fourth in the UK in a mystery shopping exercise designed to test the town's overall shopping experience. Throughout August, independent shops were secretly assessed as part of a *Location Model* project on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council. As well as mystery shopping, a street survey was conducted in which shoppers were asked to answer a number of questions about their experiences. The majority of those asked found Kidderminster to be clean and tidy and had a good variety of shops. Half of those asked also said they had seen improvements to the town in the past two years.

Elsewhere in the district, a multi-million pound regeneration project is a step closer after the Council agreed to sell land in Bewdley (subject to planning permission). The move means that the redevelopment of Bewdley town centre to create a new health centre, library, refurbished St George's Community Hall, homes (including affordable housing), shops and a new public square can move forward. It is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted later in 2010. In Stourport work continues on the regeneration of the Canal Basins and in the rural Parishes a number of projects are being supported with the help of European LEADER funding which is being co-ordinated by Worcestershire County Council. In addition, over £35,000 conservation area grant aid were awarded to properties in Stourport-on-Severn through a partnership scheme with English Heritage.

# Improving efficiency & value for money

## priorities

### Outcome

Plan in place to get the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time.

### Outcome

Customers know what to expect when they contact us and employees know what is expected of them by our customers.

### Outcome

Better understanding of our customers and the reasons they contact us.

Corporate Plan Targets	Progress
To adopt a Workforce Development Plan and implement across the Authority	Workforce Development Plan and Action Plan were adopted by Council in February 2010. The Plan identifies the key challenges facing the authority over the next two years in terms of recruiting and retaining the workforce.
To continue to work with Managers to reduce sickness levels to 8.8 days per employee per annum	Sickness for 2009/10 was 10.86 days. Continued work with managers including targeting sections with high short term sickness and monitoring on a weekly basis, sickness training and drop in sessions for employees.
Launch Customer Services Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- adopt by September 2009</li> <li>- launch awareness campaign by December 2010</li> </ul>	Strategy, including Customer Service standards approved by Council in September 2009 and promoted throughout the authority via internal newsletters and briefings, intranet and internet.
To reduce avoidable contact (NI 14) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete 4 surveys throughout the year to assess customer contact</li> <li>- Report Improvement Plan</li> </ul>	Surveys completed in June, September and December 2009 & March 2010. Data analysed and used to develop an Improvement Plan which is incorporated into 2010/11 Business Plans.
To improve and implement a revised approach to Value for Money (VfM) and deliver efficiency gains	Value for Money Strategy approved by Council in February 2010.

# priorities

## Outcome

Improved IT to support and enable more efficient and effective working.




### Corporate Plan Targets

Completed 50% of the projects related to the Council's ICT Strategy including:

- EDRMS and Thin Client for identified services
- Replace existing servers reducing numbers from 84 to 10

### Progress

Application and management software has now been installed allowing Thin Client compatible software to be delivered to any service. Thin Client devices rolled out in Housing Grants, Building Control, Council Tax, Land Charges, Benefits and HR / Payroll.  
Planned completion date for EDRM is mid May 2010.  
Majority of servers have been migrated / installed on new Server infrastructure, however due to major networking issue the final batch of server migrations has been delayed.

Indicator	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual
Net cash-releasing value for money gains	£1,288,700	Forecast £2,149,000 
Customer satisfaction rate	95%	99% 
Working days lost due to sickness	8.8 days per employee	10.86 days 

The Council has committed to an ambitious transformation programme that will include re-designing the way we work so that we are in a position to continue to deliver high quality services as efficiently as possible, within reduced budgets.

The re-design of our services falls into six areas of work - cultural and structural change, financial matters, information technology, performance management, shared services/joint working, single site and property rationalisation.

The programme will be delivered through a number of key projects including:

- Making Information Manageable - to implement a systematic and planned approach to the management of information across all directorates to better support delivery of council services.
- Mobile and Flexible Working - to further improve service delivery and reduce costs through increased process efficiency and productivity, benefiting the council, customer and employee.
- Administration, Secretarial, Clerical & Technical Support Services Review - to identify potential changes to the way these services are provided, which will enable a more efficient support structure, aligned to a culture of business improvement, to be developed and implemented.
- WETT – Worcestershire Enhanced Two-Tier Working.

## achievements



## Our Achievements in 2009/10

In addition to work around our Priorities, Wyre Forest District Council achieved great things for our communities throughout 2009/10 including:

- Wyre Forest District Council won the prestigious Society of Procurement Officers award for outstanding achievement in Procurement.
- Bewdley Museum was officially 'Accredited' by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. The Museum, which was awarded a Heritage Lottery grant of £480,000 towards redevelopment to further improve its displays and facilities, re-opened in May 2009 and has received over 111,000 visitors in 2009/10.
- Brinton Park in Kidderminster has joined the elite group of green spaces throughout Britain to achieve the prestigious Green Flag Award. The award recognises well managed and high quality green spaces around the country. To be eligible for the award, a park must meet specific criteria such as being a welcoming place, being safe and secure, sustainable, clean and well maintained.
- The second annual Wyre Forest 'No Barriers' awards ceremony was held in September 2009. The event celebrated the significant contribution made by individuals, businesses and organisations to improving access, service or employment possibilities for people with disabilities.
- The first Wyre Forest World Food Event took place in the October 2009 at Kidderminster Town Hall. Those attending sampled various foodstuffs from around the world and were treated to entertainment in many different forms throughout the day. The event marked the start of a new Community Engagement Forum where members of the public and local organisations can give their views on various matters concerning the district.
- The Orchard project at QE2 Gardens has been a huge success and has involved planting 70 fruit trees and approximately 800 other varieties of trees and shrubs within the area. Construction of new footpaths and development of 6 play sculptures are also significant features of the project. The Orchard Project was also the subject of Bewdley Museum's first exhibition for 2010. The exhibition titled the 'Jubilee Gardens Orchard Project' uses materials from local archives, maps and up to date photographs to explain the past, present and future of orchards in the area.



## achievements

- The Worcestershire Hub team dealt with **284,989** customers which was a 12% increase on the previous year. 99% of customers surveyed were satisfied or completely satisfied with the overall service they received.
- **6,860** new Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefit claims and **31,403** changes of circumstances were processed over the year which helped to ensure that customers receive the correct amount of Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefit.
- **1012** benefits welfare and intervention visits were made. Welfare visits are made to the elderly and disabled who are unable to visit the Worcestershire Hub. Intervention visits are planned monthly visits to review existing claims to ensure that the customer is receiving the correct entitlement.
- Made **21** prosecutions; **6** administrative penalties and **9** cautions were made against benefits fraud resulting in £113,002.31 being recovered by the Council.
- Our Environmental Health teams have undertaken **604** food hygiene inspections, sent **132** food samples for microbiological analysis, dealt with 67 complaints relating to food and trained **59** people from the local food industry in food hygiene matters.
- The Sustainability Team helped Wyre Forest schools with their Ecoschools work, including activities for Switch It Off week and World Water Day and arranging free school visits to Bodenheim Arboretum as part of the RSPB's Big Bird Watch. The team also attended over 20 public events to provide advice and information on sustainability issues.
- Wyre Forest District Council has worked with partner organisations to produce a Multi Agency Flood Plan ensuring a co-ordinated response to major floods in the area. The plan is linked to national policies on flooding by Defra and to warning and informing systems managed by the Environment Agency and others.
- Over 300 people attended the annual Showcase of Services for Older People where 30 organisations showcased their services, with free giveaways and healthy eating and fun exercise demonstrations.

# Council Performance 2009/10

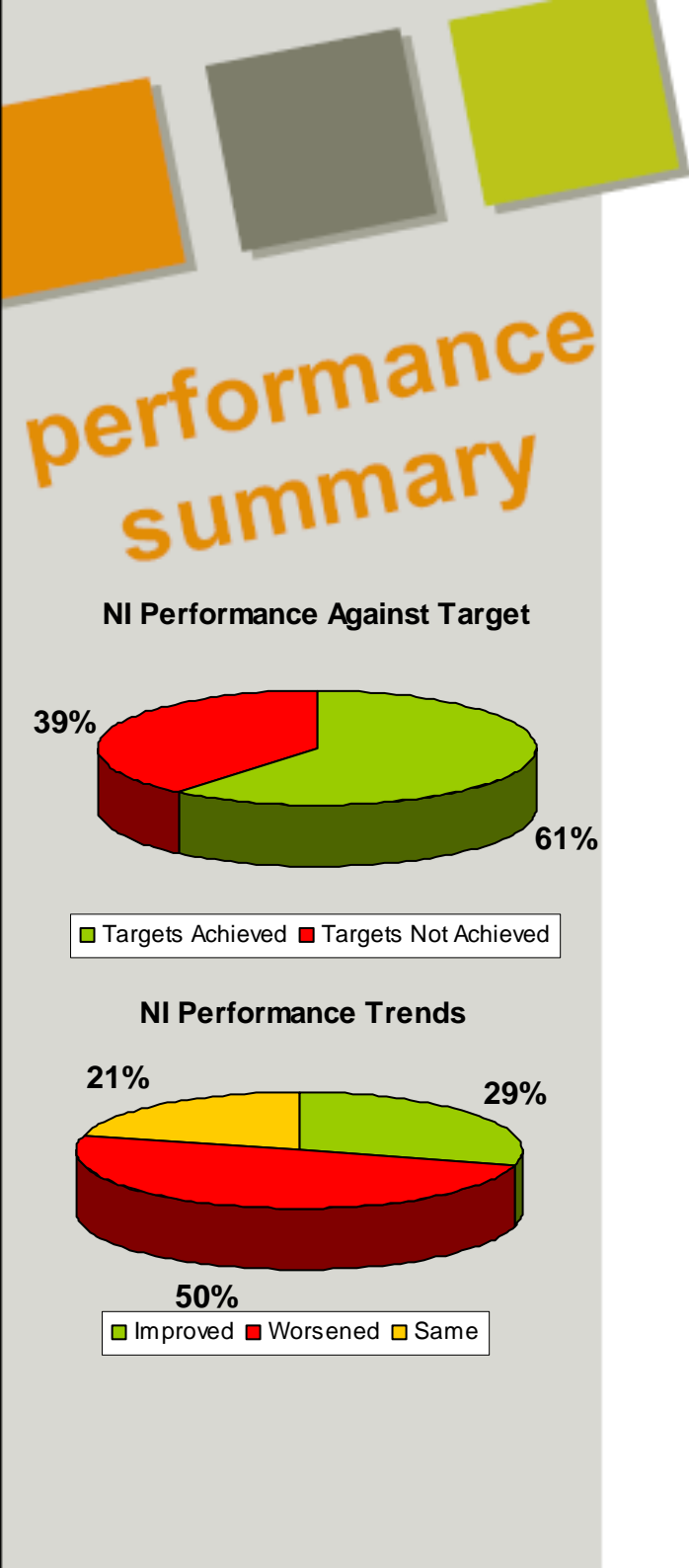
## National Performance Indicators

A set of new National Indicators (NIs) were introduced in April 2008 as part of the Government's new Performance Framework for Local Government, Comprehensive Area Assessment. The NIs replaced the previous Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs).

NIs are the only measures on which central Government will performance manage outcomes delivered by local government working alone or in partnership. They also help us to monitor our progress in achieving improvements in our services.

We are still waiting results from some National Indicators but so far, some of the top-line data for 2009/10 includes:

- 191 additional homes provided in Wyre Forest
- 75 affordable homes delivered in Wyre Forest
- 77.53% 'minor' planning applications processed in a timely manner
- 83% businesses using our regulatory services felt they were treated fairly and /or the contact has been helpful
- 90% food establishments were broadly compliant with food hygiene law
- Rated as 'effective' at reducing and dealing with fly-tipping
- 572 kg household waste collected per household
- 26.63 % household waste recycled or composted
- Average time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax claims was 12 working days
- 100% of agreed actions undertaken satisfactorily to implement long term flood and coastal erosion risk management plans



## Local Performance Indicators

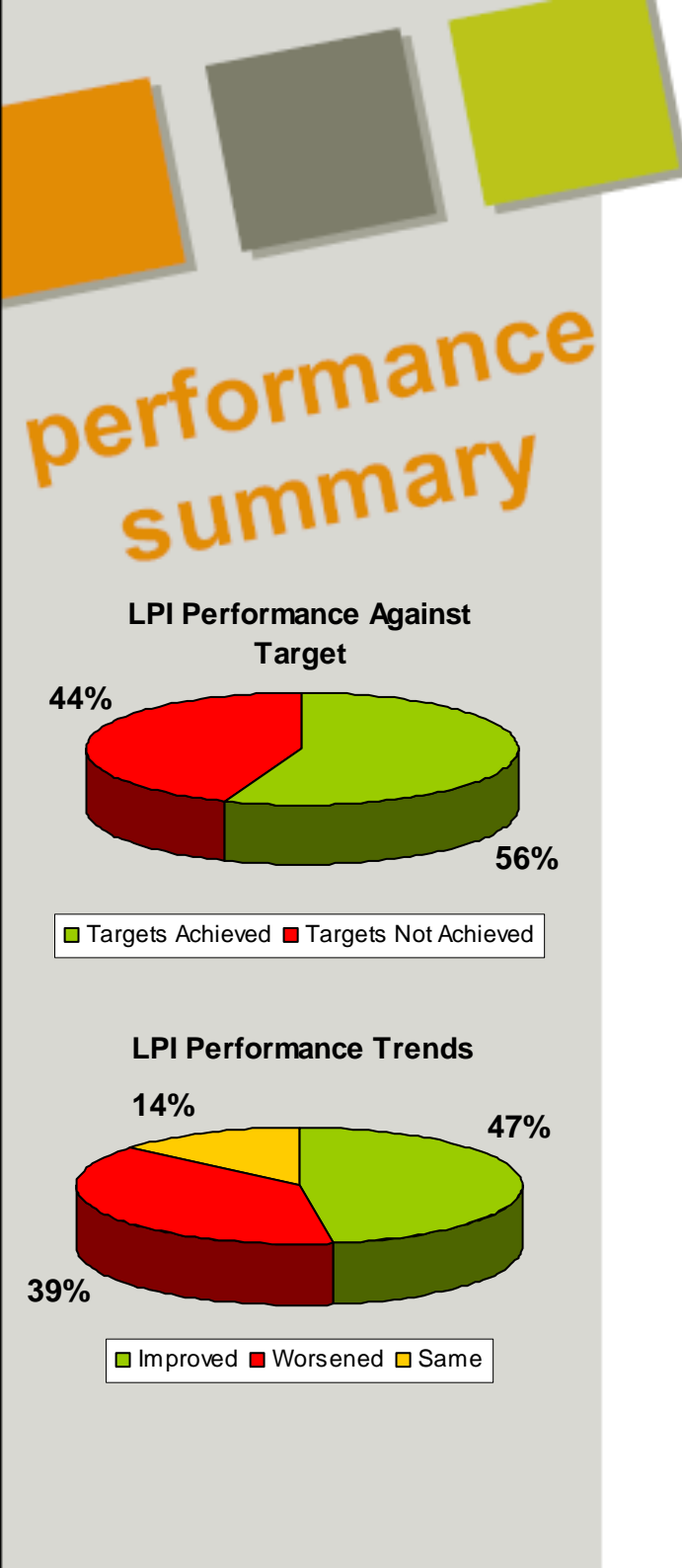
In addition to the statutory set of National Indicators, the Council also collects a number of locally set performance indicators (LPIs). The LPIs usually monitor services not included in the NI set. The LPIs are set by each Directorate to measure and monitor the performance of their services.

Here is a selection of Local Indicators and performance for 2009/10:

- 89% occupancy rate for summer holiday activities which is an improvement from 54% last year. 98% of those who attended were satisfied with the activities.
- 100% of participants in the Kidderminster Arts Festival were satisfied with the activities on offer.
- 94% of pest control orders were responded to within 5 day compared to 82% last year.
- 96% of stray dogs were collected in 1 working day.
- Over 111,000 people visited Bewdley Museum compared to 88,852 in 2008/09.
- 22 private sector dwellings were returned to occupancy or demolished. That exceeded the target of 20 and is 8 more than last year.
- 57% of responses to planning applications, 32% of planning application and 85% of development plan representation were made electronically, all increasing since last year.
- The cost per benefit claim reduced from £30.79 in 2008/09 to £19.99 in 2009/10.

Further information on National and Local Performance Indicators collected by the Council can be found in Appendices 2 and 3.

Details of all National Indicators can be found on the Communities & Local Government website <http://www.communities.gov.uk>



# Inspections & Assessments

## Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) Organisation Assessment 2009 - Summary

CAA is the framework for the independent assessment of local public services in England. It comprises 2 parts:

1. **Area Assessment** which takes into account partnership working in Worcestershire, reviewing how well partners are working together to deliver outcomes for communities, and whether things are likely to improve. Results for the assessment can be found on the Audit Commission Oneplace website. <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk>
2. **Organisation Assessment** for the Council looking at how well we use our resources and manage our performance.

The Organisational Assessment results published in December 2009 found that overall Wyre Forest District Council performs 'adequately'. It is clear about the outcomes it wants to achieve, as a result of talking to local people and businesses. This has influenced the Council's aims and priorities. The Council has been badly hit by the recession, especially with lower interest rates, and interest frozen on its Icelandic investments. But it has responded quickly by changing its financial plans and making big savings.

The Council scores **2 out of 4 for managing performance**. It is making progress against its priorities. It is increasing the number of affordable homes and there are fewer vacant properties. Applying for social rented housing has been made easier. Local people produce less waste than in other areas, but are not recycling as much of this waste as they could. In response the Council is improving local recycling facilities.

The Council is helping make a difference in the local economy. It is working with partners to redevelop the Stourport canal basins – a very successful project, and has played a major role in bringing in external funds to improve Kidderminster town centre. This has resulted in a wider choice of shops and more people using the town centre.

performance  
summary

Managing performance	2 out of 4
Use of resources	2 out of 4
Managing finances	2 out of 4
Governing the business	2 out of 4
Managing resources	2 out of 4

### Scores:

1. Does not meet minimum requirements, Performs Poorly
2. Only minimum requirements, Performs Adequately
3. Exceeds minimum requirements, Performs Well
4. Significantly exceeds minimum requirements, Performs Excellently



## performance summary

The Council scores **2 out of 4 for use of resources**. Financial management is adequate, although costs are higher than in other councils. This is because the Council is paying higher than normal contributions to its pension fund to pay for the pensions of some staff who have already retired. The Council is starting to understand its costs better and is beginning to compare them with other councils so it can make improvements. It uses the information it produces to help councillors and senior staff manage the organisation but this is not yet part of 'normal business' across the whole of the Council.

The Council has been badly hit by the recession. It used to get substantial amounts of interest on its investments that helped pay for the services provided by the Council. The global recession, lower interest rates and frozen interest on its Icelandic Investments made a significant gap in the Council's annual budget. A new 3 year financial plan has been developed this year to combat these issues. The plan requires significant efficiency savings to be made over the next three years to balance the finances. There is also a continuing risk around how much of the £9 million invested in Icelandic banks the Council will get back. However, £2.1m has already been returned and the Council continue to strive to recover more of the remaining outstanding investments.

### Future inspections and assessments

The new Government announced in May 2010 that Comprehensive Areas Assessments was to be abolished with immediate effect. As a result the below annual assessment activities will no longer be undertaken:

- area assessment
- managing performance assessment
- use of resources assessment

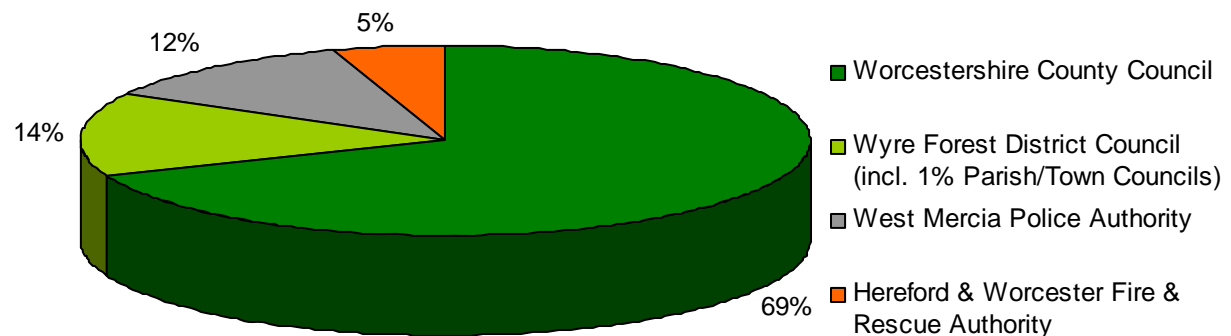
However, risk-based inspections will continue and the Audit Commission will be completing an inspection of the Council's Housing services in October 2010. The inspection will consider our strategic approach to housing to assess how well we work with partners and other stakeholders to address the housing needs and challenges within the area.

The auditors will look at whether we are working together to drive forward the housing vision for the locality and deliver better housing outcomes for the community, including disadvantaged groups.

# Finances

## Council Tax

The average band D Council Tax for 2009/10 was £1502.16 – that is just £28.89 a week. Wyre Forest District Council collects all the council tax on behalf of its partners. The total amount is then split to provide a range of services, which are a part of your everyday lives.



Wyre Forest District Council services only cost £3.80p per week out of a total average bill of £28.89 per week. For every pound of Council tax, Wyre Forest District Council receives 13 pence.

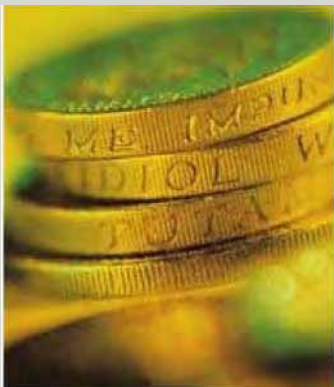
## Where does your money go?

Waste collection	£2,520
Recreation	£4,036
Highways cleansing & parking	£2,157
General culture & commercial services	£1,389
Environmental health & community safety	£2,215

Housing & welfare	£2,173
Council tax, housing benefit & financial services	£36,618
Planning & building control	£1,678
Property economic development & tourism	£983
Corporate activities	£6,322
<b>Total expenditure on services</b>	<b>£60,091</b>

*Note – figures in thousands*

budget  
summary





## Contact information

This document can be made available in other languages (including British Sign Language) and alternative formats (large print, audio tape, computer disc and Braille) on request from

Wyre Forest District Council on telephone number  
**01562 732928**

or by e-mailing

[worcestershirehub@wyreforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:worcestershirehub@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

You can find out more about Wyre Forest District Council, our performance and our plans for the future by logging onto our website at [www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

You can also visit us at one of our Worcestershire Hub Customer Service Centres:

### Kidderminster

Kidderminster Town  
Hall, Vicar Street

Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri-  
8.30am to 5.00pm

Wed 10.00am to 5.00pm

### Stourport-on-Severn

Civic Centre  
New Street

Mon -Fri 9.00am to  
5.00pm

### Bewdley

6 Load Street

Mon-Fri 9.00am to  
1.00pm