

QUARTERLY ECONOMIC BULLETIN

An economic summary for Herefordshire

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Key Points for Herefordshire:

- The seasonally adjusted claimant count saw a considerable decrease in July 2009, the first decrease since January 2008 (page 2).
- Average farm business income in Herefordshire was £32,124 per farm in 2007/08 (page 4).
- In 2008 the number of farmers working full time increased for the first time since 2000, a 3% increase on 2007 (Page 5).
- The maximum number of seasonal workers expected to be working on farms in Herefordshire in any single month in 2009 was 4,500 in June, dropping to 4,000 in July (page 5).
- In the 1st quarter of 2009, the provisional median price of a property in Herefordshire was £167,500 (page 6).
- Within Herefordshire, Ledbury and the Golden Valley area were estimated to have the most expensive entry level property prices, whereas Leominster and the South of Hereford city were estimated to have the lowest (page 7).

LOCAL NEWS

SOURCED FROM LOCAL PRESS

Development and Investment

Hereford company Allpay has signed a deal with Mastercard, the worldwide payments processor, which will see it produce more than 50 million personalised chip and PIN cards. Allpay, who were one of only seven to receive accreditation from the company, have done so after spending £2 million on their site at Whitestone. Allpay have also been leading trials of a new community based broadband scheme that uses church spires as a base for transmitting signal to local businesses and households. The innovative scheme could benefit rural communities which are in broadband not-spots and that are unlikely to get the required infrastructure upgrade from BT.

Local businesses are being encouraged to take advantage of the ongoing Passport to Export scheme, whilst conditions are ripe for exporting. The scheme, run by UK Trade and Investment through Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce, offers free capability assessments, support in visiting potential markets, free action plans, mentoring from local professionals, subsidised training and ongoing support.

Certainly Wood Ltd. of Madley has received a boost to its business after receiving £400,000 from the Strategic Investment Grant funded by Advantage West Midlands. The grant is being put to use increasing their capacity to produce high quality kiln dried firewood by creating new processing and storage facilities. The company will also be looking to make its production process 'greener' by developing biomass facilities to run their kilns.

Golden Valley based timber company Pontrilas Group Ltd. has agreed a £8.3 million finance package with their bank tailored to help them to continue investment and expansion of their business. The news comes amongst criticism from local business leaders that banks don't have enough knowledge of their business customers to steer them through the currently difficult financial times.

Agriculture and Environment

Hereford Pedicabs has received the Micro Award at the West Midlands C+ awards for their positive contribution on climate change. In 2008 the company saved 800 tonnes of carbon through its contracts with city

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NEWS (CONT.)

businesses, collecting trade waste for recycling by bicycle. The scheme will have saved the equivalent in carbon to 350 homes' usage for a year.

Three of Herefordshire's largest potato growers have joined forces to supply their produce to the KP and McCoy's crisp brands (owned by United Biscuits). The companies joined forces after facing three bad seasons and high standards in packing and have changed their focus to processing. This move also reflects the preference of potato buyers nationally to deal with groups of producers rather than individual growers.

Job Losses

The Royal National College for the Blind has taken the decision to cut 12 jobs to try and safeguard the institution's future. Poor funding conditions and government legislation have been cited as the cause for the cuts.

Able Freight, a family firm based on the Rotherwas Industrial Estate, has been forced to close for business. Many of the 27 employees who worked for the haulage company will move to B&T Hicks, the Newport based firm who have started a depot in Hereford City.

News from ESG www.esgherefordshire.co.uk

A major planning application for a flood alleviation scheme to be built at Credenhill was submitted to

Herefordshire Council at the end of July. This followed extensive public consultation both at Credenhill and in the city. The proposed scheme will save about 165 properties in the city from being flooded and over £5m in after flood clear-up.

Planning permission for the link road, connecting Edgar Street, Widemarsh Street and Commercial Road will be submitted in October following extensive public consultation in September. The link road's main role is to provide an alternative route for east-west traffic to the existing busy inner ring road, but offers many more benefits in access across the city and accident reduction.

Community and Voluntary Groups

Call to all enterprising Herefordians— The Village SOS scheme run by the BIG Lottery fund and the BBC is looking for the best village-based business ideas. Up to £400,000 will be awarded to six villages that come up with the best ideas that will create jobs and bring new dynamism into the community. For more details ring 0844 88 88 677 or parish liaison and rural services manager Anthony Bush on 01432 260 611

Halo Leisure Ltd, who provide sports and leisure facilities to the communities of Herefordshire, have been chosen as a flagship enterprise for a new scheme run by Social Enterprise West Midlands. The scheme will see Halo working with enterprises large and small championing the values and benefits of social enterprising.

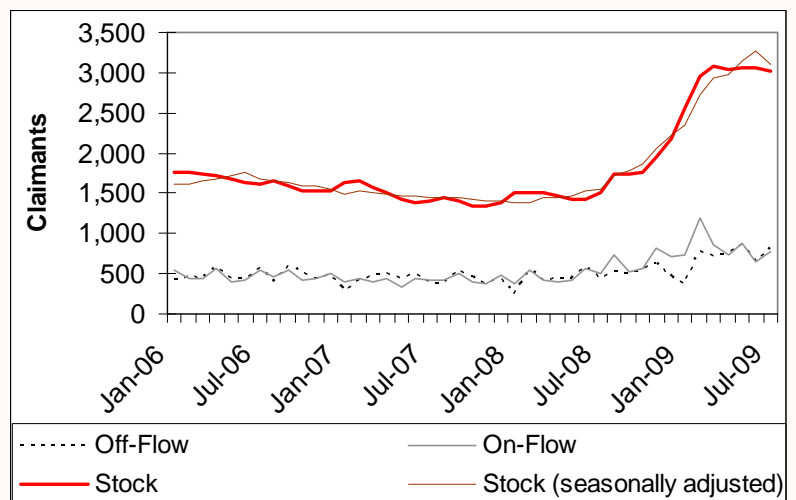
UNEMPLOYMENT

SOURCE: ONS CROWN COPYRIGHT

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) supplies data on numbers and rates of unemployment (% of the working age population claiming Jobseekers Allowance), the age of those who are unemployed and duration of their unemployment.

- The claimant count for Herefordshire saw a small decrease between June and July 2009, maintaining the relative stability seen since March. In July the count was 3,009, a 2% decrease on June, but 100% higher than in July 2008 (1,505).
- The seasonally adjusted claimant count saw a decrease in July 2009, the first decrease since January 2008 (chart).
- The unemployment rate in July was 2.9%, an increase from 1.5% in July 2008. This rate remains low compared to the West Midlands region (5.4%) and England as a whole (4.1%).
- The 18-24s had the highest age specific unemployment rate 7.0%, compared to 2.9% for the 25-49s and 1.8% for the over 50s.

Claimant on-flow, off-flow and stock (count) seasonally adjusted



'Click here for the full article' - please note this opens a new window (56.0kb)

THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE IN HEREFORDSHIRE

EDITORIAL: DAVID COLLIER, REGIONAL DIRECTOR NATIONAL FARMERS' UNION

Writing about the state of agriculture in Herefordshire is straightforward in that the county produces just about anything and everything that English farmers produce. The following is a whistle-stop tour of farming and horticulture, with a few lines about each of the major sectors to give a flavour of how each one is faring, and the issues faced by farmers and growers.

Livestock

Beef prices in July 2007 were approx 210p per kg deadweight, whereas last month a finished steer deadweight price was around 280p per kg. Influencing that has been supply – domestic supplies are tighter – fewer cattle are entering the beef herd and we have seen stronger global prices for beef as demand worldwide increased. More recently, exchange rates have helped support prices – particularly given that our major source of imported beef is Ireland. So although world demand has slipped somewhat, prices have stayed firm. Helping that has been a strong export market: we do not export huge amounts, and relatively small changes in supply availability can impact on price levels. Looking ahead, a strengthening of the pound would have an impact on beef prices. The livestock sector needs healthy margins to ensure that producers are economically viable and can provide domestic supplies in the future.

The UK sheep flock fell 6% last year, which impacts on future supply capability. Prior to the major foot-and-mouth outbreaks of 2001, sheep numbers were circa 44m; today, they are nearer 33m. The UK trend is mirrored elsewhere in Europe – which is good news for us as a big percentage of our lamb goes to France. Further, New Zealand has been hit by drought, which has affected their supply capability as they try and recover sheep numbers by holding back, meaning fewer are available for export. Indicators are positive for lamb, so we found it hard to understand the drop in prices earlier this summer. But the big issue is the structure of the industry: the average age of farmers is creeping up, but those in the sheep sector are older than average; encouraging young farmers into a sector that has long struggled with low profitability is a challenge.

The pig sector has been under tremendous pressure for more than a decade. We have lost a large percentage of the total pig herd, and producers have quit in huge numbers – particularly as regulation began to bite. This is undoubtedly a sector that has benefited from stronger global demand pushing up world market prices and, given the volume of bacon we import from Denmark and Holland, exchange rates have played their part too. The lower numbers have also led to higher prices.

But the news is not entirely positive: higher feed costs (the major cost of production) lessen profitability, whilst raising pigs tends to use more energy than other sectors.

Arable

Two years ago feed wheat prices were around the £90-£100 per tonne mark and heading up, partly thanks to the terrible weather that summer, which was also seen elsewhere in Europe. Production globally slipped back. As a result, we had global stocks that were measured in days – in marked contrast to the grain mountains that were spoken about in the 1980s. Subsequently we saw the price peak at £180. Higher prices invariably trigger a supply response – we planted 14% more. Good yields led to a bigger crop and prices fell back to less than £90, although there was a big premium for quality grains (poor weather led to a poor quality crop). That increase in supply was seen in other major grain producing countries. In early August 2009, the price of milling wheat dropped £8.00 in one week, to c £102/tonne. Feed wheat is now about £92; malting barley c £82; and feed barley c £78. What of the future? We have seen the balance tip when crops go from domestic shortage to big export surplus. The crop is likely to be smaller from a substantially reduced area, but the costs of growing that crop will impact on profitability.

Oilseed rape prices similarly leapt in late 2007, as concerns over stock levels grew. But prices have remained reasonably high through 2008 and 2009. Looking ahead, there is a shortage of alternative oilseeds (soya crop forecasts have been repeatedly downgraded in Argentina) and much volatility in the market place: in global markets this summer, we have seen prices changing £10 a day. Pre 2007, that sort of change would have taken weeks if not months to filter through. It is a complex market place, further complicated by future demand for oilseeds becoming a feedstock for energy markets.

Potatoes

The sector traditionally had a very much supply-driven market, thus if there were high prices one year farmers would plant more, leading to low prices the next. This is not the case now: there is very little speculative planting and the majority of

THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE IN HEREFORDSHIRE CONTD. FROM PAGE 3

the crop is forward contracted. The consolidated market – in terms of growers, packers and processors – facilitates the supply chain working together. The current crop is fairly similar to last year's in terms of volume, but yields are looking potentially good given a strong growing season to date; disease or poor weather could change that, but there seems to be confidence at present.

Horticulture

The horticulture sector is multi-faceted and it is difficult to say anything meaningful about the sector in a few words. Suffice to say that crops grown in the open are vulnerable to poor weather; there can be problems getting sufficient workers for the harvest (though I am receiving few reports at present), and a life dealing with the supermarkets is not usually a bowl of cherries... Improved weather in the late summer could boost demand for fruit and salad crops.

Poultry & Eggs

In a relatively short time period, chicken became the most consumed meat in the UK, overtaking beef. Due to speed of production, that trend is played out elsewhere. Poultry has been particularly affected by the global recession and a slump in demand. But because UK production tends to be targeted at better quality birds, British poultry has not been as vulnerable as elsewhere. Nevertheless, the sector is under pressure (feed costs, desire of retailers to keep prices low) and needs reinvestment. The important thing to note is that

when global demand recovers it will be the poultry sector that will increase first; we will see a quick response and there is capacity there to increase.

By contrast, the egg sector is relatively buoyant; it benefits from stable demand. At the same time, we are also trading up – buying ethically-produced eggs, better quality products, which helps support the Herefordshire egg producer.

Dairy

The dairy sector saw big price rises in late 2007, which was needed because of higher feed costs. There was buoyant demand for milk products globally, driven particularly by Asian economies as they expanded. More recently, prices have dipped significantly, and the sector is under a great deal of pressure. Liquid milk is robust: we have dedicated supply chains and increased segregation that gives confidence for the future. But the real challenge is in the cheese market. We import huge volumes from Ireland where they have low production costs. As exchange rates alter and as the pound begins to strengthen, we can see renewed pressure. Earlier this summer we saw the collapse of Dairy Farmers of Britain, a further blow to the confidence of the sector. Reinvestment is difficult when margins are so tight, and dairy farmers are nervous about the work needed to comply with revised rules on nitrates, costing as much as around £50k per producer.

David Collier

Regional Director National Farmers' Union

FARM BUSINESS SURVEY 2007/08

The Farm Business Survey is undertaken each year by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and collects full management accounting data on the agricultural activities of farm businesses and some information about non-agricultural activity. Results for the **2007/08 accounting year** are based on returns from 59,500 farms, covering only those that occupy a farmer for at least half of their time.

- Farm incomes in Herefordshire have seen considerable variation since 2002/03, but with the last two years being characterised by increases in income.
- Average farm business income in Herefordshire was £32,124 in 2007/08 compared to £37,341 in the West Midlands and £48,144 in England as a whole. This was an increase from £18,800 in 2006/07.
- Across England, specialist poultry farms have the highest farm business income and have increased every year since 2003/04. General cropping, cereals, horticulture and dairy all have higher farm business incomes than the average for all farm types in 2007/08 and, with the exception of dairy, have all seen an increase in the last two years. Specialist pig, grazing livestock (less favoured areas - LFA) and grazing livestock (lowland) all have incomes below average.
- In 2007/08, 51% of farms in England had some form of diversified activity (non-agricultural activity of an entrepreneurial nature which uses farm resources). The majority of these include letting out buildings for non-agricultural use; when this is excluded the proportion drops to 28%. This generated a total income of £400 million in 2007/08. In comparison total income generated from off-farm employment and self-employment of farmer and spouse was £290m across England in 2007/08.

'Click here for the full article' - please note this opens a new window (60.0kb)

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (DEFRA)

AGRICULTURAL CENSUS 2008

The Agricultural Census, a sample survey of between 45,000 and 75,000 holdings, is carried out every June by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) where farmers are required to state what agricultural activity is happening on the land as of June each year. This article uses the **June 2008** census data. Amongst the findings for 2008, were the following:

- The number of **farmers working full time** increased for the first time since 2000, a 3% increase on 2007. The number of **casual employees** on farms in Herefordshire decreased by 1%, a change from the 145% increase seen between 2003 and 2007.
- In Herefordshire the majority (46%) of farms are less than 5 hectares and a further 19% are between 5 and 20 ha (2,364 and 989 holdings respectively). Only 11% of farms are 100 hectares or greater in size (548 holdings). These proportions are similar to in the West Midlands region and Nationally.
- Apart from the 'other' category '**grazing livestock (lowland)**' accounted for the greatest proportion of farm holdings in Herefordshire, although this decreased from 23% in 2004 to 19% in 2008. Herefordshire has a proportionately higher amount of **horticultural** (7%) and **general cropping** holdings (6%) compared to other areas.
- **Permanent grass** (43%) and **crops and bare fallow** (41%) together accounted for the vast majority of Herefordshire's agricultural land (by area) in 2008.
- Out of the 41% of land that was crops or bare fallow, 60% was used for growing cereals, 41% of this for wheat. Between 2007 and 2008 the area planted as wheat increased by 19%. Oilseed rape and potatoes accounted for the next largest proportions of cropping area, 9% and 8% respectively.
- Out of all livestock, sheep were farmed on the greatest number of holdings (36%) within Herefordshire. In 2008 this was a total of 624,204 animals, a 2% reduction on the number in 2007. Cattle were farmed on 25% of holdings, a total herd of 121,130 a 3% reduction on 2007.

['Click here for the full article'](#) - please note this opens a new window (72.0kb)

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (DEFRA)

SEASONAL WORKERS ON FARMS 2009

In order to inform service planning, West Mercia Constabulary has, each year since 2006, gathered information from farmers on the number of seasonal workers from other countries that they expect to employ on their farms. In **2009** the following was reported:

- The total number of individual seasonal workers from overseas expected to be employed during the course of 2009 is 5,600, which is a 16% decrease compared to 2008 (6,700).
- The maximum number of seasonal workers expected to be working on the farms in any single month was 4,500 in June, dropping to 4,000 in July.
- More men (58%) were expected than women (42%) and no dependents were expected to come with the overseas workers during the course of 2009.
- These seasonal workers were expected to come mainly from Bulgaria (47%), Poland (27%) and Romania (14%). The proportions of Bulgarians and Romanians have increased over the last three years since the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) changed from January 2008 to be exclusively for workers from Bulgaria and Romania.
- The highest proportion of overseas workers were expected to arrive during May (40%) and June (35%).
- 17 farms stated that they provide accommodation for the seasonal workers, mainly in caravans (71%).

['Click here for the full article'](#) - please note this opens a new window (132.0kb)

SOURCE: WEST MERCIA CONSTABULARY

HOUSE PRICES

HM Land Registry collects data on house prices from all house sales in England and Wales which forms the basis of the data below. The most recent data for house prices is **Quarter 1 in 2009** and for the House Price Index, **June 2009**.

This data is published as a series of 'Live Tables', including various measures of property price – the mean, the median and the lower quartile. The median and lower quartile figures are shown in the table below for Herefordshire, the West Midlands and England & Wales.

In the 1st quarter of 2009, the *provisional* median price of a property in Herefordshire was **£167,500**. In comparison, the median property prices for England & Wales and the West Midlands were £157,000 and £130,000 respectively.

Volume of Sales

The Land Registry figure for the number of house sales in Herefordshire during April 2009 was 125. In the 6 months prior to May 2009 (November 2009 to April 2009) the volume of sales averaged 119 per month, which is a decrease of 38% from

the same period last year (190 sales per month). For comparison, England & Wales also experienced a fall of 53% and the West Midlands region saw a similar fall of 54%.

Affordability

The preferred measure for house price affordability is the ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings. For 2008, the ratio for Herefordshire was 9.1, that is, for those on lower quartile earnings a house at the bottom end of the market would cost them 9.1 times their annual earnings. This is less than in 2007 when the ratio was 9.4, but a large increase on 2000 (5.1). In 2008, Herefordshire had the worst affordability ratio out of the West Midlands Authorities (unitaries, counties and metropolitan boroughs) and neighbouring counties.

Year of 1st Quarter	Median property prices			Lower quartile property prices		
	England & Wales	West Midlands	Herefordshire	England & Wales	West Midlands	Herefordshire
2007	£170,000	£140,000	£183,000	£123,000	£106,000	£141,000
2008	£173,500	£142,000	£180,000	£123,500	£111,000	£139,500
2009^a	£157,000	£130,000	£167,500	£110,000	£98,000	£130,000

Source: HM Land Registry

^aFigures for 2009 are provisional.

House Price Index

The Land Registry releases a House Price Index (HPI), calculated by selecting properties that have changed hands more than once since January 1995, so the index is based on genuine price increases for particular properties.

The table gives the index values in June 2009 and the current annual rate of change in house

prices for Herefordshire, the West Midlands and England & Wales.

	HPI			Annual change (%)		
	Eng & Wales	West Mids	Hfds	Eng & Wales	West Mids	Hfds
Jun-08	284.6	251.5	273.3	-1.1%	-2.5%	-1.3%
Jun-09	244.7	221.5	239.7	-14.0%	-11.9%	-12.3%

Source: HM Land Registry

Private Rental Levels

The Rent Service (TRS) publishes Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates monthly - these represent the amount payable in Housing Benefit to cover rental of different dwelling sizes. The LHA rates are based on on-going surveys of the rental market by TRS, who then use median values as the basis for their figures.

There has been a marked decrease in the private rental level for 5 bedroom dwellings in Herefordshire since August 2008. Rental levels

for smaller dwellings have shown relatively little change, if at all, over this period.

	<i>(Calculated from the weekly LHA rental levels published by TRS)</i>					
	1 Bed-room Shared	1 Bed-room	2 Bed-room	3 Bed-room	4 Bed-room	5 Bed-room
Aug-08	£287	£421	£526	£652	£787	£1,103
May-09	£295	£421	£544	£652	£785	£890
Jun-09	£295	£424	£536	£632	£777	£852
Jul-09	£295	£421	£531	£627	£752	£827
Aug-09	£295	£419	£531	£627	£752	£852

ESTATE AGENTS SURVEY

Herefordshire Council undertakes an annual survey of local estate and lettings agents. It provides information on minimum (Entry Level) prices and monthly rental levels by property size. Supplementary information is provided about areas of high and low demand for purchasing property in Herefordshire.

Method

A total of 47 questionnaires were distributed to estate and lettings agents in Herefordshire in April 2009. In total, 24 responses were received, of which 8 were from Hereford city (out of 20), 2 were from Bromyard (out of 2), 1 was from agents representing the Golden Valley area (Hay-on-Wye & Pontrilas) (out of 3), 0 were from Kington (out of 2), 4 were from Ledbury (out of 7), 5 were from Leominster (out of 7) and 4 were from Ross-on-Wye (out of 6).

Entry-Level House Prices

The average (mean) of the estimates was calculated for each location and dwelling size. The lowest and highest estimates for each dwelling size are given in the table. The area surrounding Ledbury and the Golden Valley area were estimated to have the most expensive entry level property prices, whereas Leominster and the South of Hereford city were estimated to have the lowest.

With some exceptions (most notably for three-bed properties), mean “entry level” property prices have generally fallen across the county over the previous year.

Range of Entry-Level House Prices			
One bed flat	£71,300 in Leominster	to	£95,000 in Ledbury surrounds
Two bed flat	£86,300 in Leominster	to	£130,000 in the Golden Valley area
Two bed house	£108,000 in Hereford city (south)	to	£176,300 in Ledbury surrounds
Three bed house	£133,800 in Hereford city (south)	to	£230,000 in the Golden Valley area
Four bed house	£159,000 in Hereford city (south)	to	£300,000 in the Golden Valley area

Minimum Monthly Rental Levels

The average (mean) of the estimates was calculated for each location and dwelling size. The lowest and highest estimates for each dwelling size are given in the table. Both the areas surrounding Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye were estimated to have the most expensive private rental levels and Leominster was estimated to have the lowest.

In contrast to property prices, with some exceptions (most notably for properties in Leominster surrounds), estimates for rental levels have increased.

Range of Minimum Monthly Rental Levels			
One bed flat	£325 in Leominster surrounds	to	£425 in Ross-on-Wye surrounds
Two bed flat	£388 in Leominster	to	£488 in Ledbury surrounds
Two bed house	£430 in Leominster	to	£563 in Ledbury surrounds
Three bed house	£488 in Leominster	to	£650 in Ledbury surrounds
Four bed house	£544 in Leominster	to	£788 in Ross-on-Wye surrounds

The full Estates Agents Survey Report is **not currently available** but will be made available via the following link as soon as possible

‘Click here for the full article’ - please note this opens a new window (xx.xkb). Any queries please contact the Research Team: 01432 260464 or researchteam@herefordshire.gov.uk

RECENTLY PUBLISHED RESEARCH

National Research

Rural Money Matters: A support guide to rural financial inclusion

Commission for Rural Communities (June 2009)

People in rural areas experience the same financial challenges as people living in urban areas, but like poverty, financial exclusion is less visible in rural areas compared to urban areas. This makes it harder for service providers to identify and therefore target support to the people who most need it and can mean policy and programmes end up focusing on urban areas.

Around 200,000 people living in rural England do not have access to a bank account and the number of mainstream banking facilities in rural areas is declining. Poor public transport systems and long travel times make physical access to mainstream financial services difficult and more costly for people living in rural communities. Higher service costs in rural areas, due to a dispersed client base and poor economies of scale, are also a challenge when delivering debt advice and credit union outreach services. New technologies, like video-link and the Credit Union Current Account, can make rural outreach more cost effective, but high set up costs can be a barrier to their use.

The recession is affecting the extent to which people are financially included in rural England. New groups of society are seeking debt advice and affordable credit, and traditionally vulnerable groups such as those on low incomes are creating a stronger demand for financial services.

Despite the recent uplift in Government resources and action to promote financial inclusion, the infrastructure required (credit unions, debt advisers, banking facilities, etc.) is weak and can be missing in rural areas. Therefore, rural areas are less well equipped to respond to the rise in demand for financial services.

For a copy of the full report please visit

<http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/>

Review of evidence on the impact of economic downturn on disadvantaged groups

Department for Work and Pensions (May 2009)

This working paper reviews the evidence on the impact of the last three economic recessions on disadvantaged groups (that is, disabled people, ethnic minorities, lone parents, people aged 50 and over, the 15 per cent lowest qualified, and those living in the most deprived local authority wards), as well as ex-offenders and the self-employed.

The data shows that the recessions of the early 1970s, 1980s and 1990s were associated with rising unemployment, with high levels of unemployment extending well beyond the initial fall in output. Disabled people, ethnic minorities and (since the 1980s) lower skilled workers have experienced an increase in, and longer duration of, unemployment during past recessions. Evidence on the impact of past downturns on older workers and the self-employed is more complex and has varied for different downturns. Nonetheless, older workers have longer spells of unemployment and so older workers becoming unemployed are at a particular disadvantage as they have a lower chance of re-entering employment. For the self-employed, the evidence highlights the importance of fluctuations in house-prices, the severity of the recession in terms of length of unemployment spells, willingness of banks and other financial institutions to lend, and the effect of changes in the Government's approach to local authority service provision.

For a full copy of the report please visit

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/WP68.pdf>

Local Research

Housing needs studies continue across the county. After a survey and analysis is completed, a report is issued to the parish or town council and circulated to other interested parties both within and outside Herefordshire Council. Reports have been completed for the following areas: **Ewyas Harold, Bishops Frome, Bosbury, Clehonger, Yarpole, Eardisland, Little Dewchurch, Luston, Tarrington and Cusop**. In May surveys went out to **Lea Parish** and **Whitbourne** and in July and August surveys went to **Much Dewchurch** and **Wigmore** areas. www.herefordshire.gov.uk/research

Forthcoming HIRN seminar:

Herefordshire quality of life survey results

6th October 2009

www.herefordshirepartnership.com/hirn

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