

QUARTERLY ECONOMIC REPORT & BULLETIN
READERS' SURVEY 2009 RESULTS

The Research Team would like to thank all readers who returned their readers' survey!

In order to seek readers' views on the Quarterly Economic Bulletin (QEB), a survey was sent out in August 2009, to approximately 360 readers that include Herefordshire Council employees, Councillors, parish clerks, local businesses, community/voluntary organisations, schools, colleges and libraries. 76 questionnaires were returned and the results are outlined below.

Please note that all percentages shown are as a proportion of the total number of survey respondents not of the proportion who chose to answer a particular question.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate which category applied to them (Q2). The table below gives the number of respondents from each category. Note: respondents may have ticked more than 1 category depending on how they use the report.

Q2: The number of respondents to the survey from each category

Category	No. of respondents
Parish Clerk	9
Voluntary/Community Organisation	12
Local Business	15
Library	5
School/College	4
MP/MEP	1
Councillor	10
Employee of Herefordshire Council	9
Employee of other Herefordshire Partnership Organisation	5

Other: Consultant to ESG (1), Education – Hereford College of Arts (1) Housing Association (1), Council for World Partnership Development – Diocese of Hereford (1) Government Department (1) Agriculture (1) Regional Rural Affairs Forum (1) Researcher at neighbouring council (1) PCT (2)

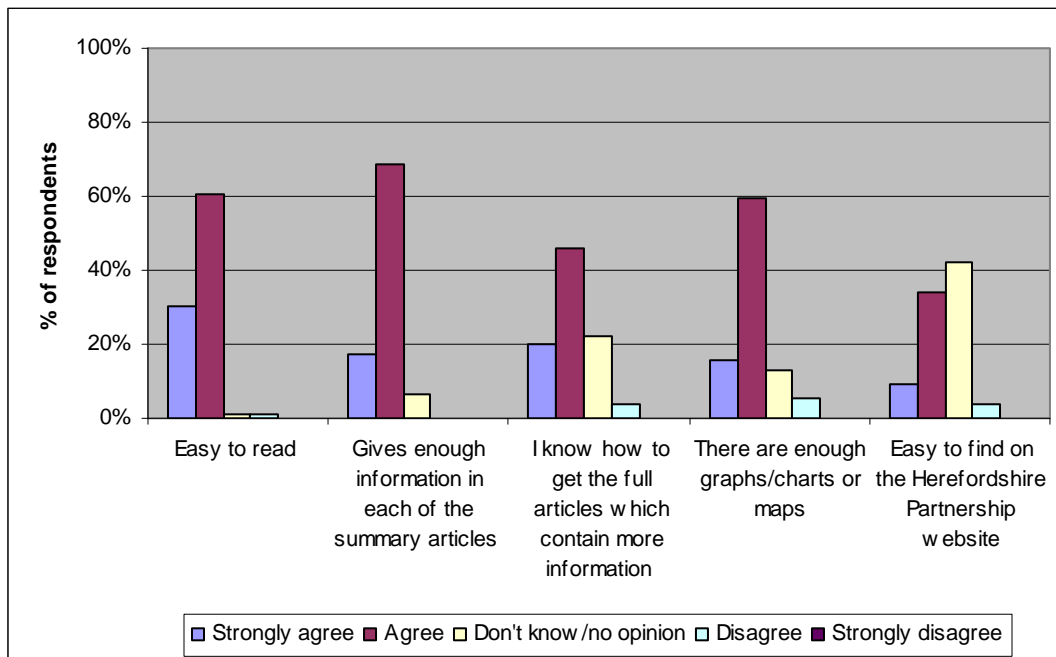
The aim of the QER is to provide up to date socio-economic data from a range of sources to a variety of readers and the Bulletin version was developed to summarise the key messages from each article. However, this inevitably means that not all articles in the Bulletin will be useful to everyone all the time, as some respondents have identified in their responses. Hopefully, it can act as a reference document to inform readers when new data becomes available and where to go for further information.

The questionnaire then asked about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a list of statements about the QEB (Q3). The responses are summarised in the table below:

Q3: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Quarterly Economic Bulletin?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know/no opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Easy to read	30%	61%	1%	1%	0%
Gives enough information in each of the summary articles	17%	68%	7%	0%	0%
I know how to get the full articles which contain more information	20%	46%	22%	4%	0%
There are enough graphs/charts or maps	16%	59%	13%	5%	0%
Easy to find on the Herefordshire Partnership website	9%	34%	42%	4%	0%

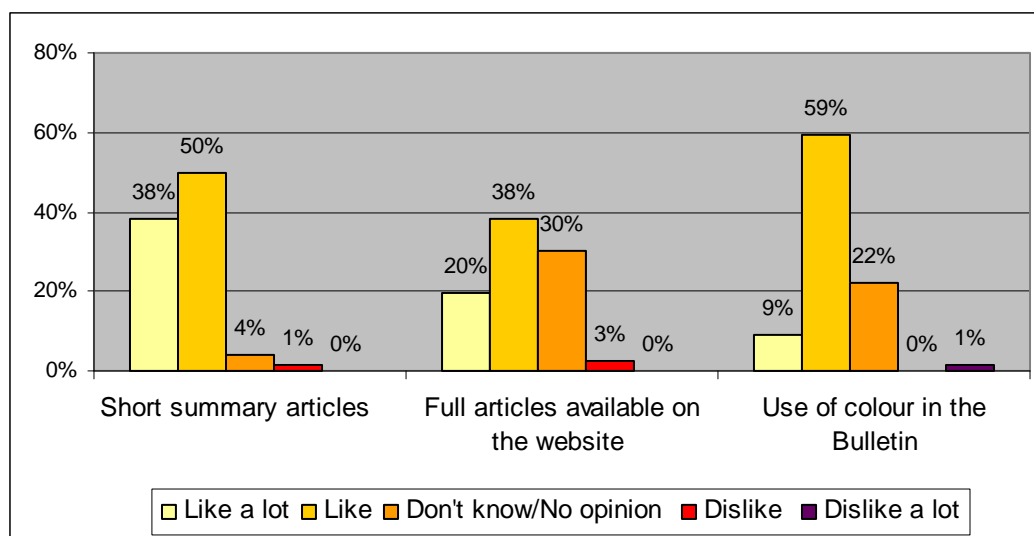
- 91% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Bulletin was easy to read and only 1% disagreed.
- 86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Bulletin gives enough information in each of the summary articles. No respondents disagreed.
- 66% agreed or strongly agreed that they knew how to get the full articles, which contain more information, 4% of respondents disagreed and 22% responded don't know/no opinion.
- 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that there are enough graphs/charts or maps and 5% disagreed.
- A lower proportion (43%) agreed or strongly agreed that the QEB was easy to find on the Herefordshire Partnership website, 4% disagreed and 42% responded don't know/no opinion.



In question 4 readers were asked about what they thought of the Bulletin version of the Quarterly Economic Report. The responses are summarised in the table below:

Q4: What do you think of the current 'Bulletin' version of the Quarterly Economic Report?

- 88% of respondents either liked or liked a lot the short summary articles in the Bulletin. Only 1% indicated they disliked short summary articles.
- 58% of respondents either liked or liked a lot having the full articles available on the website. 3% of respondents disliked the full articles being available on the website.
- 68% of respondents either liked or liked a lot the use of colour in the Bulletin. 1% of respondents (1 respondent) 'disliked a lot' the use of colour in the Bulletin.

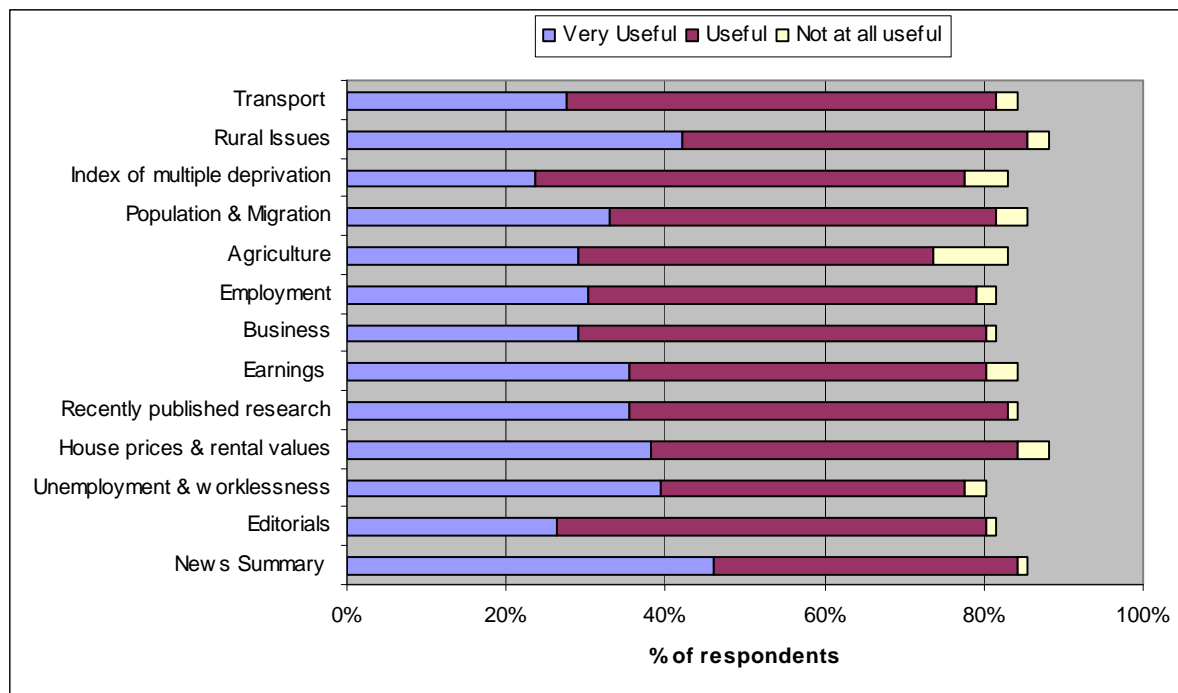


Question 5 of the survey asked how useful readers found various themes in the Bulletins and full reports. The results for each theme are summarised in the table below.:

Q5: How useful do you find each of the following themes/sections in the Bulletins and full reports?

	Very Useful	Useful	Not at all useful
News Summary	46%	38%	1%
Editorials	26%	54%	1%
Unemployment & worklessness	39%	38%	3%
House prices & rental values	38%	46%	4%
Recently published research	36%	47%	1%
Earnings	36%	45%	4%
Business	29%	51%	1%
Employment	30%	49%	3%
Agriculture	29%	45%	9%
Population & Migration	33%	49%	4%
Index of multiple deprivation	24%	54%	5%
Rural Issues	42%	43%	3%
Transport	28%	54%	3%

The themes that the most survey respondents found either useful or very useful were ‘rural issues’ (86%), ‘news summary’ (84%), ‘house prices & rental values’ (84%) and ‘recently published research’ (83%). The themes that the most respondents indicated were not at all useful to them were ‘agriculture’ (9%) and ‘index of multiple deprivation’ (5%).



Finally readers were asked whether they had any further comments on the format of the Quarterly Economic Reports or if there were any articles/themes they thought should be included in the future. Suggestions for improvements to content and/or format included in the responses received are listed in the table below.

Q6: If you have any further comments on the format of the Quarterly Economic Reports or if there are any articles/themes you think should be included in the future, please provide details below.

Scope for expansion of bulletin - preferably emailed instead of posted.
I use the 1/4 bulletin when out & about meeting people - hence the need for a hard copy. I can refer to it away from my P.C. - which is a good thing.
...the P/C [Parish Council] would for time present still like to receive a paper bulletin - will advise when they have reconsidered. Please send one electronically & then I can see if they can be persuaded! Only a few of them on email.
1. Given that the Herefordshire Council & NHS Trust are supposed to be working more closely together, I would appreciate some health information, especially related to unemployment, housing and rural issues (e.g. isolation, income & benefits). Many disadvantaged people have health concerns. 2. The economics associated with green issues & climate change would also be VERY helpful - i.e. the local context e.g. changes in farming practice, changes in local business activity, transport analysis...
If primary media from now on will be electronic, images/photos etc may enhance appearance and readability.
Volunteering and its value to Herefordshire...

For further information on this article, please contact the Research Team on 01432 260 893, or e-mail researchteam@herefordshire.gov.uk