



-Local Planning - District Profile

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A profile of the Harborough District, providing a portrait in terms of its geography, population, transport and communication links, services and facilities, natural environment, built environment, economic activity and the environment.

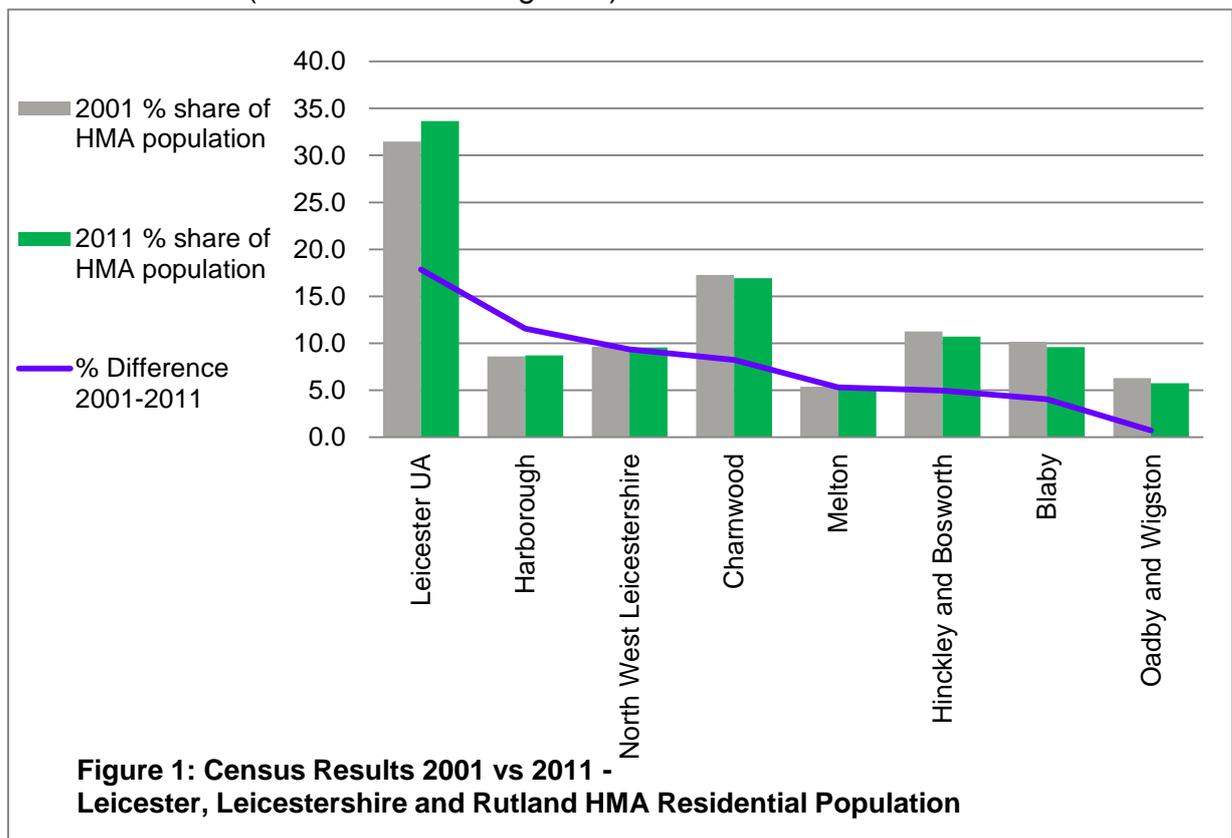


Location

1.1 Harborough District is situated in the East Midlands region and encompassed by the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA). It covers an area of 238 square miles of rural south and east Leicestershire. Bordering counties include Warwickshire to the west, Northamptonshire to the south and Rutland to the east. Harborough borders 4 other Leicestershire district authorities, namely Charnwood, Melton, Oadby and Wigston and Blaby, and adjoins the east of Leicester City at Bushby, Scraftoft and Thurnby.

Population

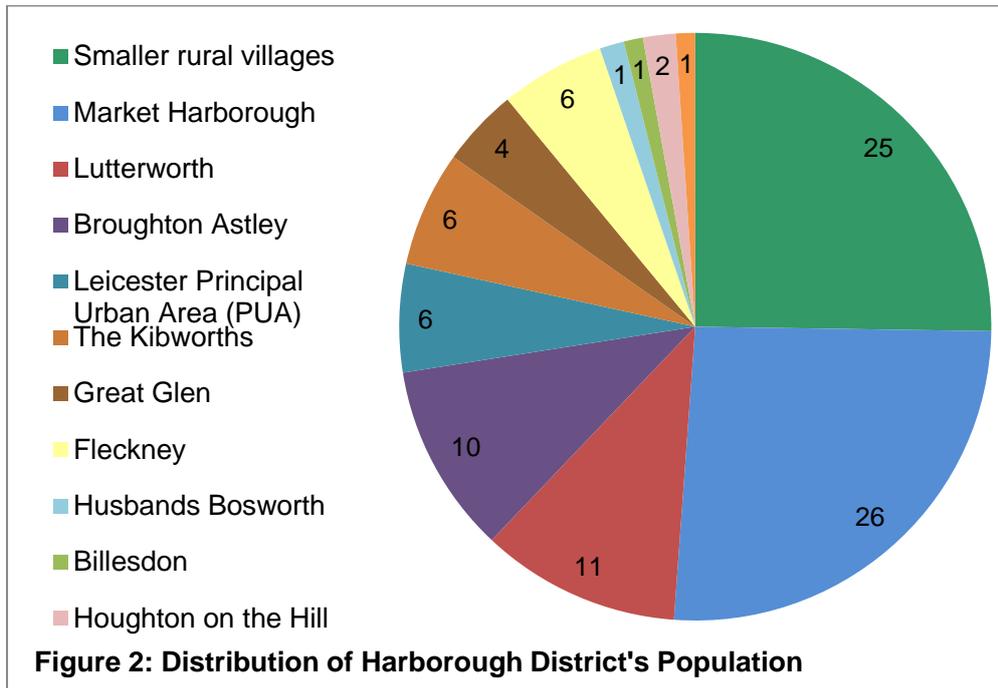
2.1 The total Leicester and Leicestershire HMA and Rutland residential population rose by 10.2% to 980,500 in 2011. The residential population of Harborough District grew to 85,382 by 2011 (a population increase of 11.5% since 2001). This represents the 2nd highest percentage increase in Resident Population across the HMA (see blue line on Figure 1).



2.2 The District's population is most concentrated in:

- Key Centres Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Broughton Astley (47%)
- Rural Centres of Billesdon, Great Glen, Houghton on the Hill, Husbands Bosworth, the Kibworths and Fleckney (22%)
- Leicester's Principal Urban Area (PUA) encompassing Bushby, Thurnby and Scraftoft (6%).

The remaining 25% of district residents are dispersed across some c.80 smaller rural villages (see Figure 2).



- 2.3 The 2011 Census highlights small but significant changes to the population structure for the Harborough District since 2001:
- Almost 11% increase in the population of school age children and students.
 - Strong evidence of an ageing population inhabiting the District. 16% of all UK residents are aged 65 and over, compared with 18% of all Harborough District residents. Also, the mean age of Harborough District's population increased from 40 in 2001 to 42 in 2011.

Households

- 3.1 According to the 2011 Census there are 34,898 occupied households in the District (an increase of 18% since 2001). The household population increase is set to continue, with a further rise of 21.6% by 2031¹ due to natural population growth and a rise in migration into Harborough.
- 3.2 Household tenure statistics for Harborough District, captured by the 2011 Census, are reflective of the economic slow down and difficult mortgage market when compared with the 2001 Census:
- 'Social rented other*' increased three-fold from 522 to 2,442 households
 - 'Owned: with mortgage or loan' dropped by 8% to 13,849
 - 'Private rented: private landlord or letting agency' increased by 132% from 1,524 in 2001 to 3,540 in 2011

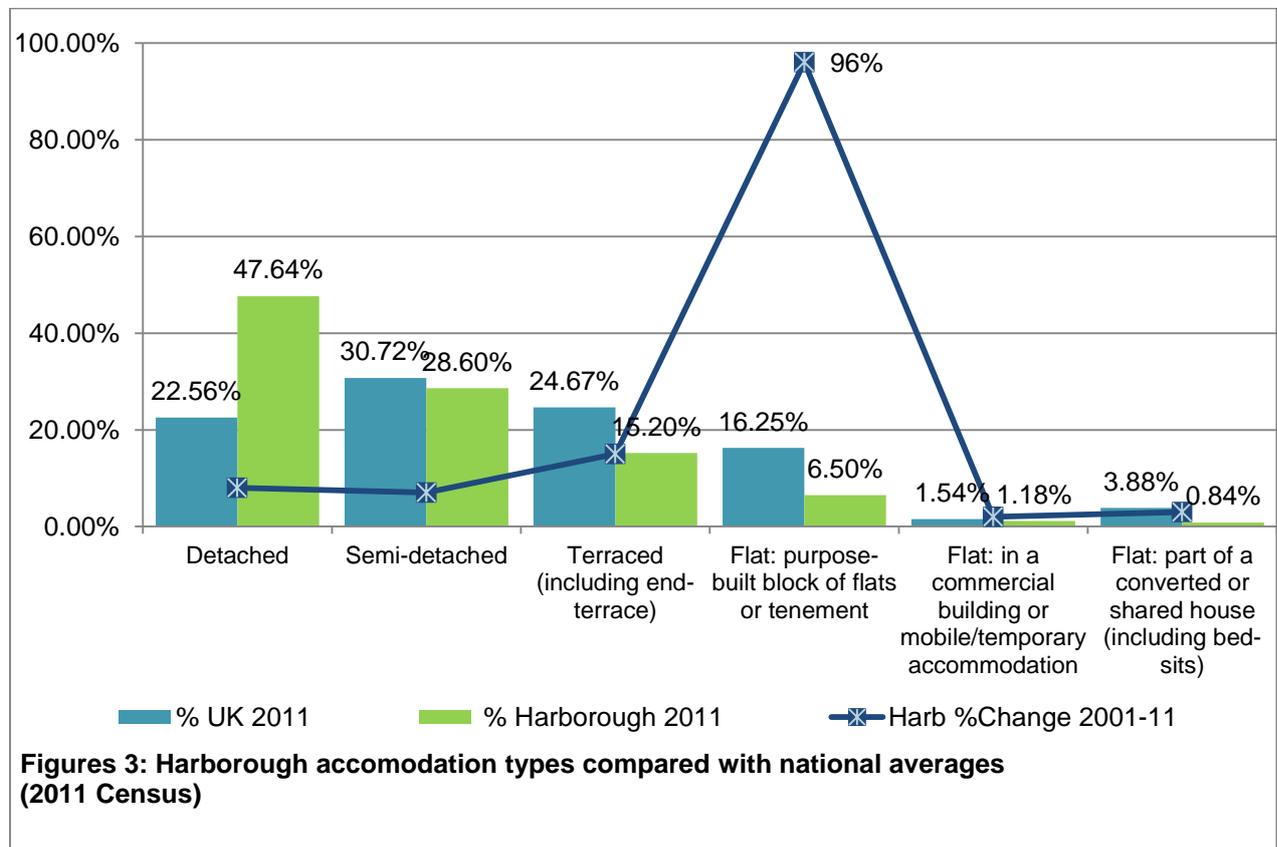
¹ Strategic Housing Market Assessment, June 2014

- ‘Shared ownership’ tenures almost doubled from 226 in 2001 to 414 in 2011; demonstrating progress in terms of increased access to Affordable Homes since adoption of the Core Strategy

3.3 However, there has also been a 25% increase in property which is owned outright; demonstrating some resilience to the challenging economic climate and synonymous with above average proportion of residents aged 65 and over in the District.

3.4 Accommodation types across the District reflect the area’s rural and low density characteristics, and the relative affluence of residents compared with UK averages (see Figure 3):

- 48% occupy detached houses, compared with 23% nationally
- 7% occupy purpose flats, compared with 16% nationally
- 15% occupy terraced houses, compared with 25% nationally



Health

4.1 The Census 2011 found that 3.5% of the resident population in bad/very bad health, which is below the regional and national averages (5.56% and 5.49% respectively). 5.89% of residents aged 16-64 years considered that their day-to-day activities were limited through health or disability (lower than the national average of 8.3%). Some 8,983 (10.5%) Harborough residents provided unpaid care according to the 2011 Census, which in line with national averages. In

Harborough, 2,420 (2.8%) residents provide 20 or more hours of unpaid care per week (slightly below the national average of 3.7%).

Local representation

- 5.1 The District Council is made up of 25 Wards, represented by a total of 37 elected Ward Members (elected May 2015). There are 12 Committees including Full Council, the Council Executive and the Scrutiny committees. There are also 3 Executive Advisory Panels; all of which meet varying degrees of regularity.
- 5.2 Market Harborough is not represented by a parish or town council. The town is split into 4 wards with 2 or 3 councillors per ward. Although there is no town council, but representative bodies, The Market Harborough Civic Society and Sustainable Harborough are representative bodies that influence the development in Market Harborough. S106 monies and new homes bonus are distributed in Market Harborough on the basis of a bid for funds by local groups.
- 5.3 Lutterworth has a Town Council comprising of 13 Town Councillors (elected May 2015). A Town Mayor is selected by the Town Council each year.
- 5.4 There are also 45 Parish Councils and 42 Parish Meetings operating in the smaller settlements across the Harborough District.
- 5.5 Harborough District has a number of Neighbourhood Planning Forums and 2 'made' Neighbourhood Plans (Broughton Astley and Billesdon). There are several designated Neighbourhood Areas with accompanying Neighbourhood Plans which are all at various different stages of the plan making process.

Transport & Communications

- 6.1 **Road connections** The M1 passes through the District in the west whilst the M6/A14 is located to the south. Other main routes in the District include the A6, A47 and A 508 which between them provide links to Leicester, Northampton, Kettering and Corby.
- 6.2 **Car ownership** across the District is high with 88% of residents having access to least 1 car; travelling by car is the predominant method of travel to work for Harborough residents.
- 6.3 **Rail** Market Harborough is located on the East Midlands Trains route and enjoys frequent links to London, to Leicester and to other stations north and south.
- 6.4 East Midlands **Airport** and Birmingham Airport are within 50 miles of Market Harborough.
- 6.5 **Bus services** through the district connect various villages to larger servicing settlements, with services provided by Hinckley Bus, Arriva and Demand

Responsive Transport (DRT). DRT was introduced by Leicestershire Council Council in April 2015, replacing the scheduled Rural Rider bus service. For more details of bus services throughout the Harborough District, full details are available at www.choosehowyoumove.co.uk.

6.6 **Internet connectivity** was identified as an issue across the District, with the most rural areas still reliant upon slow dial-up connections. Several settlements throughout the district have benefitted from, or are soon to benefit from, the implementation of 'Superfast Leicestershire'. The project, aims to bring superfast fibre broadband to as many premises in Leicestershire as possible. To track the progresses of the project please refer to www.superfastleicestershire.org.uk.

Services & Facilities

7.1 Key Centre settlements provide the most services and facilities for the district, namely Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Broughton Astley. In addition to the basic services such as primary schools, GP surgeries, Library, Leisure Centre, a Cemetery, churches and day nurseries and pre schools, there are services which set Market Harborough apart as the biggest provider in the District including a hospital with Minor Injury Unit, a middle school and college, Brooke House independent school and college, several dentists and a wide range of other medical services including physiotherapists and osteopaths, etc. The Town centre benefits from a large Market Hall, refurbished Library and Museum, a Theatre (amateur) and a wide ranging retail offer including national chain stores and a large number of privately owned retailers. There is an abundance of open space provision including parks, allotments, a Cricket ground, a Rugby Club, Football Club and Bowling club.

7.2 Previous development has led to **Market Harborough** having a wide range of very good services that make the town attractive for residents and visitors. The services available in Market Harborough support the continued status as the principal town within the District. GP capacity issues will need further investigation. Section 106 contributions will be sought for extensions to existing schools and towards new 420 place primary school.

7.3 **Lutterworth** is a smaller town than Market Harborough, with less than half the population, but it benefits from a good range of service provision, but on smaller scale to Market Harborough. Lutterworth's extensive range of services and facilities supports its continued designation as a Key Centre. No insurmountable infrastructure constraints have been identified to date. Section 106 contributions will be sought to improve equipment for the current health provision and possible school extensions.

7.4 **Broughton Astley** does not have a range of shops and services commensurate with the size of its population. This is recognised in Core Strategy policy CS 16:

Broughton Astley which set out the strategic context for the preparation of the Broughton Astley Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan was made part of the development plan for Harborough District in January 2014 following a successful referendum result. In line with the Neighbourhood Plan's aims to improve services and facilities for the community, the Council has resolved to grant outline planning permission for a mixed use development comprising up to 310 residential units; a food store (up to 2,450 m² gross) and petrol station; a community leisure/sports building; a medical centre; employment units (up to 5,500 m² in total) and a variety of areas for formal and informal sport and recreation, foot and cycle paths, foot and cycle paths, sustainable drainage features, access roads and landscaping. The Section 106 agreement is pending for the consent.

7.5 **Rural Centres** across the District (Kibworth, Fleckney, Great Glen, Billesdon, Ullesthorpe, Husbands Bosworth and Houghton on the Hill) all have a provision of 4 of the 6 key services as a minimum (General Practitioner, Library, Public House, Primary School, Food shop, Post Office) and bus services to a Town or District Centre serving each settlement and its catchment area.

7.6 **Selected Rural Villages** (namely, Bitteswell, Church Langton, Claybrooke Magna, Dunton Bassett, Foxton, Gilmorton, Great Bowden, Great Easton, Hallaton, Lubenham, Medbourne, North Kilworth, South Kilworth, Swinford, Tilton on the Hill and Tugby) and their catchment areas are served by a minimum of 2 out of the 6 key services.

7.7 Settlements within easy reach of Leicester's services and facilities provision include **Thurnby, Bushy and Scraftoft** and a number other small villages.

Natural Environment

8.1 Harborough is predominately a rural area and will remain so. Whilst there are no national landscape designations, the District is made up of five broad landscape character areas (as determined by the Harborough District Landscape Character Assessment); the Laughton Hills with its distinct ridgeline of rolling hills and steep slopes; the Lutterworth Lowlands characterised by an open and relatively flat to gently rolling landscape; the Welland Valley which follows the gently meandering course of the river and its wide, flat valley; High Leicestershire with its distinctive steep valleys, broad ridges, woodland areas and network of small villages; and the Upper Soar with its wide, open landscape with lack of substantial woodland.

8.2 The Rivers Welland and Avon form much of the District's southern boundary and other main rivers are the Swift, Sence and Eyebrook. The Leicester Line of the Grand Union Canal is a particularly important landscape and cultural heritage asset for the District. Constructed in the early 1800s, and the original part of the Grand Union Canal, the waterway was constructed to transport heavy goods

including coal from the Derbyshire and Nottingham coalfields, and was part of the network which would later connect Birmingham to London. A prominent feature of the canal in the district is the Grade II* listed Foxton Locks, which allowed boats to travel up a 75ft hill using a series of lock gates. It is at this point that a branch of the Canal splits off to Market Harborough.

8.3 A number of watercourses in the District are prone to flooding during extreme weather conditions. The River Welland, which flows through the centre of Market Harborough, is particularly vulnerable.

8.4 Like much of the East Midlands and Leicestershire, Harborough is relatively poor in biodiversity and geodiversity terms. 1.21% of the District's area is covered by Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) whilst a further 0.42% is covered by Local Wildlife Site designations. There are 2 Local Nature Reserves at Scraftoft and North Kilworth. The area known as Leighfield Forest straddles the border between Harborough and Rutland. It is a well-wooded area of high nature conservation, landscape and historical importance where several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) protect what remains of the ancient woodland. Whilst there are no Regionally Important Geological Sites in the District, there is one Geological SSSI, Tilton Railway Cutting SSSI, which is a 750m section of disused railway cutting providing exposures of sediments which were deposited during the Lower Jurassic Period.

Built Environment

9.1 A defining characteristic of both the landscape and townscape of Harborough is the quantity and quality of its historic assets. With 1,250 Listed buildings, 62 Conservation Areas, 60 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 6 Registered Parks and Gardens, the District has a rich heritage.

Employment & Economic Activity

10.1 Estimates from Nomis for 2013 – 2014 indicate that there are now c87,500 residents in the Harborough District:

- 53,700 are of working age (16 – 64 years)
- 44,000 residents are economically active
- 1,500 unemployed individuals aged 16 – 64 years
- 9,700 working age residents are economically inactive

10.2 There is a range of range of occupations engaged in by Harborough Workplace Population², the most prevalent being:

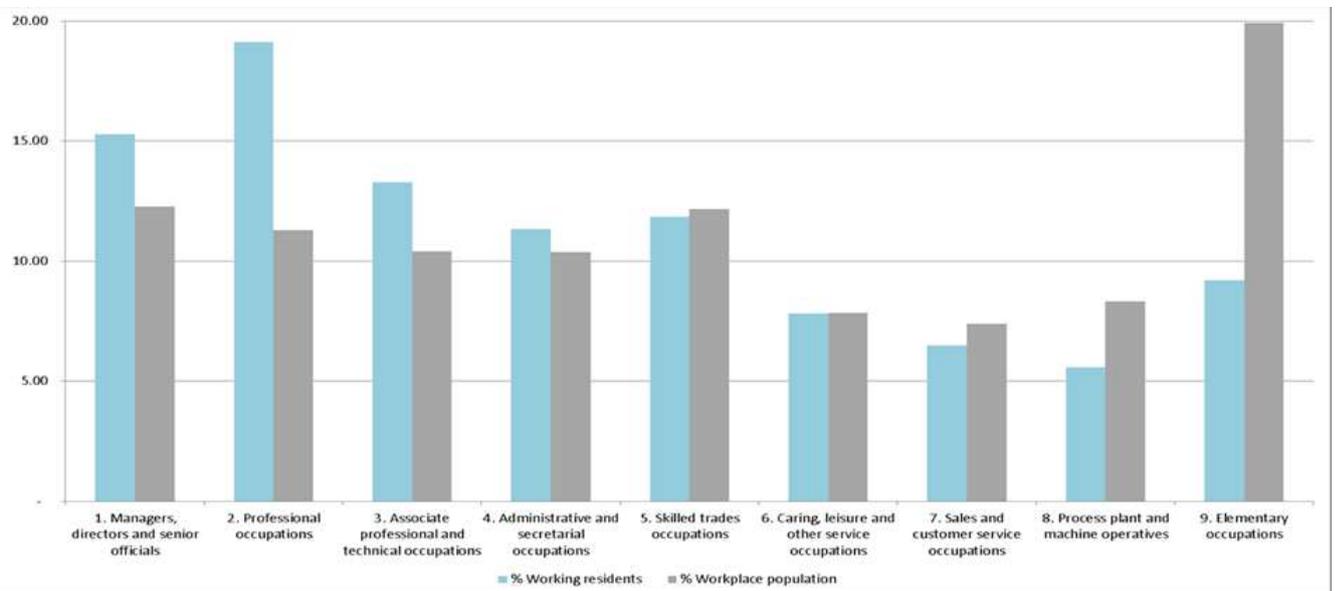
- 20% of employed in 'Elementary occupations'
- 12% working as 'Managers, directors and senior officials'

² ONS definition of 'Workplace Population: the population of the given geography during standard working hours'.

- 12% are ‘Skilled trade persons’
- 11% are Professional occupations
- 10% are ‘Associate professional and technical occupations’

10.3 There are some significant differences between the skill base of the residential population of Harborough District and the workplace population, illustrated in Figure 4. The most prevalent occupation amongst Harborough’s workplace population is ‘Elementary Occupations’³ whereas the dominant occupation type amongst Harborough’s residential population is ‘Professional Occupations’⁴.

Other occupation types, exported by Harborough residents, to other areas of work include Managerial positions⁵, Associate professionals⁶ and Administrative occupations⁷; all more prevalent amongst the residential population than that of the Workplace Population.



Source: Census 2011 statistics from www.nomisweb.co.uk

Figure 4: Harborough District Census 2011 - Occupation types of residential population and Workplace population

³ ONS definition ‘Elementary Occupations: Occupations classified at this level will usually require a minimum general level of education (that is, that which is acquired by the end of the period of compulsory education). Some occupations at this level will also have short periods of work-related training in areas such as health and safety, food hygiene, and customer service requirements.’

⁴ ONS Definition ‘Professional Occupations: A degree or equivalent qualification, with some occupations requiring postgraduate qualifications and/or a formal period of experience-related training.’

⁵ ONS Definition: ‘Managers, directors and senior officials: A significant amount of knowledge and experience of the production processes and service requirements associated with the efficient functioning of organisations and businesses.’

⁶ ONS Definition: ‘Associate professional and technical occupations: An associated high-level vocational qualification, often involving a substantial period of full-time training or further study. Some additional task-related training is usually provided through a formal period of induction.’

⁷ ONS Definition: ‘Administrative and secretarial occupations: A good standard of general education. Certain occupations will re-quire further additional vocational training to a well-defined standard (e.g. office skills).’

10.4 The difference in the residential skill base and workplace skill base for the District is also clearly illustrated when we look at differences of income between the two groups, with the residential population earning above the national average weekly income and the District's workplace population earning below the national average weekly income (see Figure 5).

Gross weekly earnings	Harborough residents (£)	Harborough workplace (£)	Great Britain (£)
Full-time workers	552.5	498	520.8

Figure 5: Census 2011 Gross weekly earnings

10.5 Compared with the national average we have a higher level of employment within a few key sectors including Agriculture/forestry/ fishing and textile manufacturing; Wholesale and retail trade, vehicle sale and repair; Transport and storage; Mining and quarrying (employs only 91 people across the District but this is above the national average for employment in this sector); Chemical manufacturing; and Administrative and support services.

10.6 Census data indicates that industries under represented across the Harborough District, compared with national averages range from 'Financial and insurance activities' and 'Information and communication' to 'Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply' to 'Arts, entertainment and recreation activities', to name but a few.

10.7 The average distance travelled to work by Harborough residents 17.5km, compared with a national average of 14.5km. Almost 2/3rds of the Harborough workforce travels to work by car or van, use of public transport is low (3%). Working from home accounts for 15% of the Harborough workforce; the roll out of high speed broadband to rural localities currently underway may lead to the increase of home-based working over coming years.

Environment

11.1 Harborough District is a large rural district. The carbon emissions in 2012 were 8.6 tonnes per person. This is an increase from 2011, when the figure was 8.2 tonnes per person. This is the first increase since 2005. This compares to 7.7 tonnes per person for Leicestershire and 7 tonnes per person for England. Harborough District has the second highest emissions in Leicestershire.

11.2 Transport is responsible for the highest proportion of the emissions, with 44% of the total. Domestic energy use accounts for 28% of the total and industrial and commercial account for 26% of the total. The final 2% of emissions are due to agricultural land use.

11.3 Carbon emissions are of particular concern in the centre of Lutterworth where traffic fumes contribute to poor air quality. This situation is being actively

monitored through the designation of an Air Quality Monitoring Area and the establishment of an Action Plan to seek improvements the current levels.

11.4 In terms of waste reduction and recycling, the District is edging towards the target of 'recycle/compost 58% of household waste by 2017 ', as set out in the adopted Core Strategy (2011). The overall recycling rate for Harborough Apr 2013 to Mar 2014 was 57.3%

11.5 So far as renewable energy production in concerned, currently there are several sites in the district producing significant renewable energy, or with planning permission to do so. Since 2006, 15 wind turbine schemes have been implemented and 1 Solar Park has been consented.