

Land Use

Indicator 1: Land used for Urban Activities

Map 1 below shows the land use change to urban use in the country between April 1996 and the end of March 1997. Towns with a population over 7000 population are shown. Land use change is recorded once development has started.

In total, only 9.43 hectares of land in Hertfordshire has changed over to urban use during this period. In Stevenage, 8 hectares covers a crematorium development while 1.43 hectares at Goffs Oak west of Cheshunt covers a residential development. These changes in land use represent only a 0.04% increase in the urban area of Hertfordshire in towns over 7000 in population.

Other developments in urban areas where construction is under way, include West of Bishops Stortford, Hill End and Leavesden Hospitals and Goffs Oak residential development. As these were either started in the previous 12 month period or prior to monitoring the indicator, this land use change has not been included in this State of the Environment report.

Green Belt Issues

Hertfordshire has 81,316 hectares (ha) of designated Green Belt. This policy seeks, amongst other matters, to contain the expansion of urban areas into the countryside by using designated land use boundaries. New development proposals within the Green Belt have been suggested which would cover 800 ha (+/- 100 ha) West of Stevenage and 5400 ha (+/- 100 ha) elsewhere in the county. These proposals have still to be approved by the District Councils involved but show how the pressures for new housing and development in the county can potentially influence land-use change.

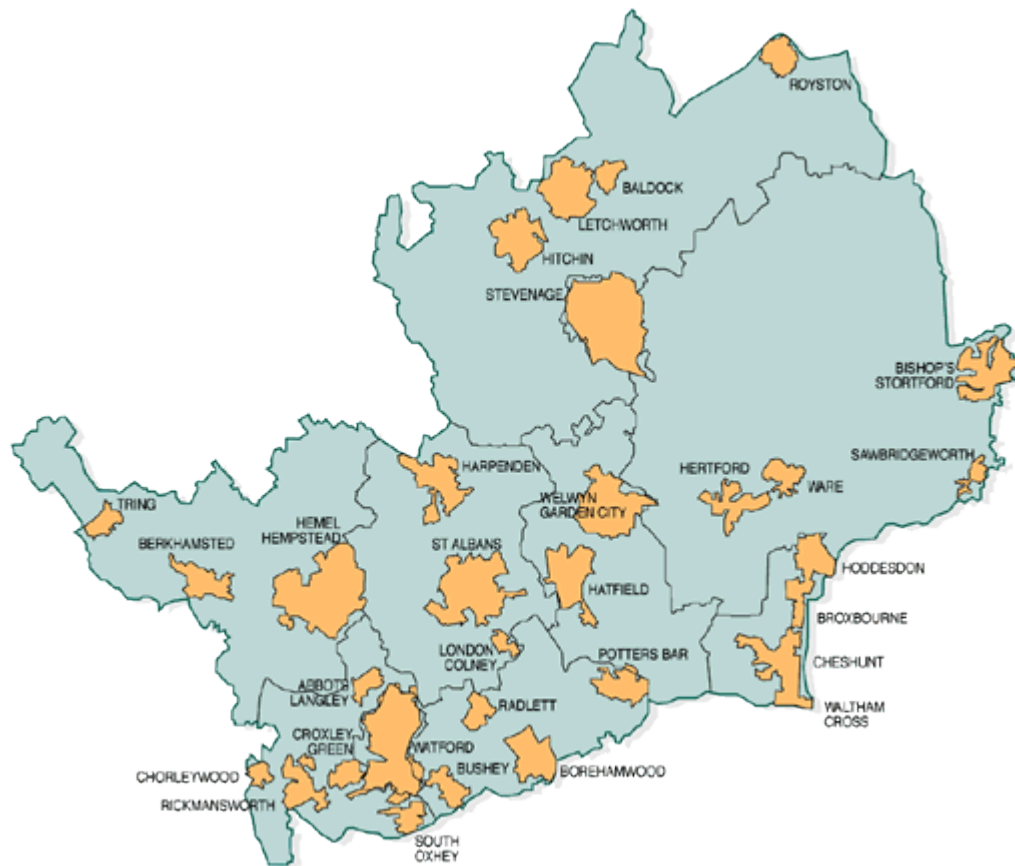
Indicator 2: Number of households

Until the mid-term census results become available, the figures for household numbers have to be taken from the last census in 1991. The 1981 census showed there were 344,500 households with residents in Hertfordshire, in 1991 this increased to: 380,866 households with residents.

This figure is revised from last year which was based on "total spaces in households" rather than "households with residents" in 1991.

The number of households has continued to grow more rapidly than the population. Population rose by 1.1 % between 1981 and 1991 but the number of households rose by 12%, from 344,500 to 380,866. Therefore household numbers are increasing but average household size is decreasing.

In the future the largest growth in households will be in single households. Between 1991 and 2011 Hertfordshire needs to provide for another 65,000 households. The majority of which will be provided within existing urban areas.



For further information contact:

Rob Wright, Hertfordshire County Council Environment Department.

(01992) 555287.