

East Midlands State of the Environment

Sustainable places

A healthy environment is good for people and the places where they live. It can improve their health, their wellbeing, their relationship with their local community, even their local economy. A sustainable place is one where the needs of people and communities, the use of resources and production of waste and emissions are balanced so as not to compromise its future needs.

Pressures on people's local environment and the environmental infrastructure are mounting. The population of the East Midlands has been predicted to grow from the current 4.5 million to 5.3 million with a housing requirement of 253,800 new homes by 2026. We are working with local authorities and communities on local plans to maximise benefits to the environment and reduce the risk from flooding.

We need to maintain the current quality of our environment and act to improve it so everyone enjoys clean air and water, and a diverse environment in which to thrive.

At a glance

- The most unfavourable local environments as measured by the Environmental Quality Index occur in region's cities: Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, and Nottingham.
- These unfavourable environments are often in places with the most deprived communities as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation.
- The Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that 17 per cent of East Midlands Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs - areas of approximately 1500 people) are in the worst fifth of nationally deprived communities (source: Communities and Local Government).
- There are 2750 LSOAs in the East Midlands of which 13 per cent have no access to green or recreational space (source: Natural England). The Peak District in the north eastern tip of the East Midlands has up to 90 per cent accessible green or recreational space. The average across the region for each LSOA is just 6 per cent area with accessible space, which includes natural habitats, parks, footpaths, and cycle ways.
- Household recycling rates have increased from 13 per cent in 2001/02 to around 45 per cent in 2008/09. The East Midlands had the highest rate of household recycling in England and the least residual waste per household, at 609 kilogrammes.
- There were 61,242 fly-tipping incidents in 2008/09 (14 per cent less than 2007/08), with an estimated clearance cost of £3.1 million. 65 per cent of these incidents involved household waste.
- The Environment Agency deals mainly with the larger illegal fly-tipping incidents, termed as 'big, bad and nasty'. Most of these multiple illegal dumps bigger than a 'tipper load', often involve

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organised crime, and include drummed hazardous waste. Nationally there 676 incidents in 2009, with approximately three per cent of these in the East Midlands. Offenders that were prosecuted received a range of penalties including custodial sentences, curfew orders, seized assets, and with an average fine of £6000.

- Over 2,000 pollution incidents were reported to us in 2009 in the East Midlands. The most frequent premises type recorded for the worst incidents (category 1 and 2) were waste management and agriculture, although a third of incidents were not attributed to a premise type.
- The UK is using resources equivalent to 3.4 planets. Based on consumption the East Midlands has an ecological footprint value of 5.24 global hectares per capita (gh/c) compared with a UK average of 5.3 gh/c. This compares with a global biocapacity of two global hectares per capita (source: Ecological footprint: Global footprint network).
- Around 295,000 properties in the East Midlands are at risk from flooding; that's around 12 per cent of properties. Nearly 200,000 of these properties are residential properties.
- Nearly 75,000 properties are at significant risk from flooding. This means they have a greater than 1 in 75 year chance of flooding.
- In 2007/08 the Environment Agency sustained 110 objections to planning applications on the grounds of flood risk. Nine applications were eventually approved against our advice.
- There are 3,700 sensitive infrastructure sites in floodzone 2 (risk of 1 in 1000 year chance of flooding) including nine hospitals, over 750 power and gas stations, 130 care homes, 228 health centres and 69 emergency response centres.
- Our flood warning service is now available to all homes and business with a land telephone line in the East Midlands.

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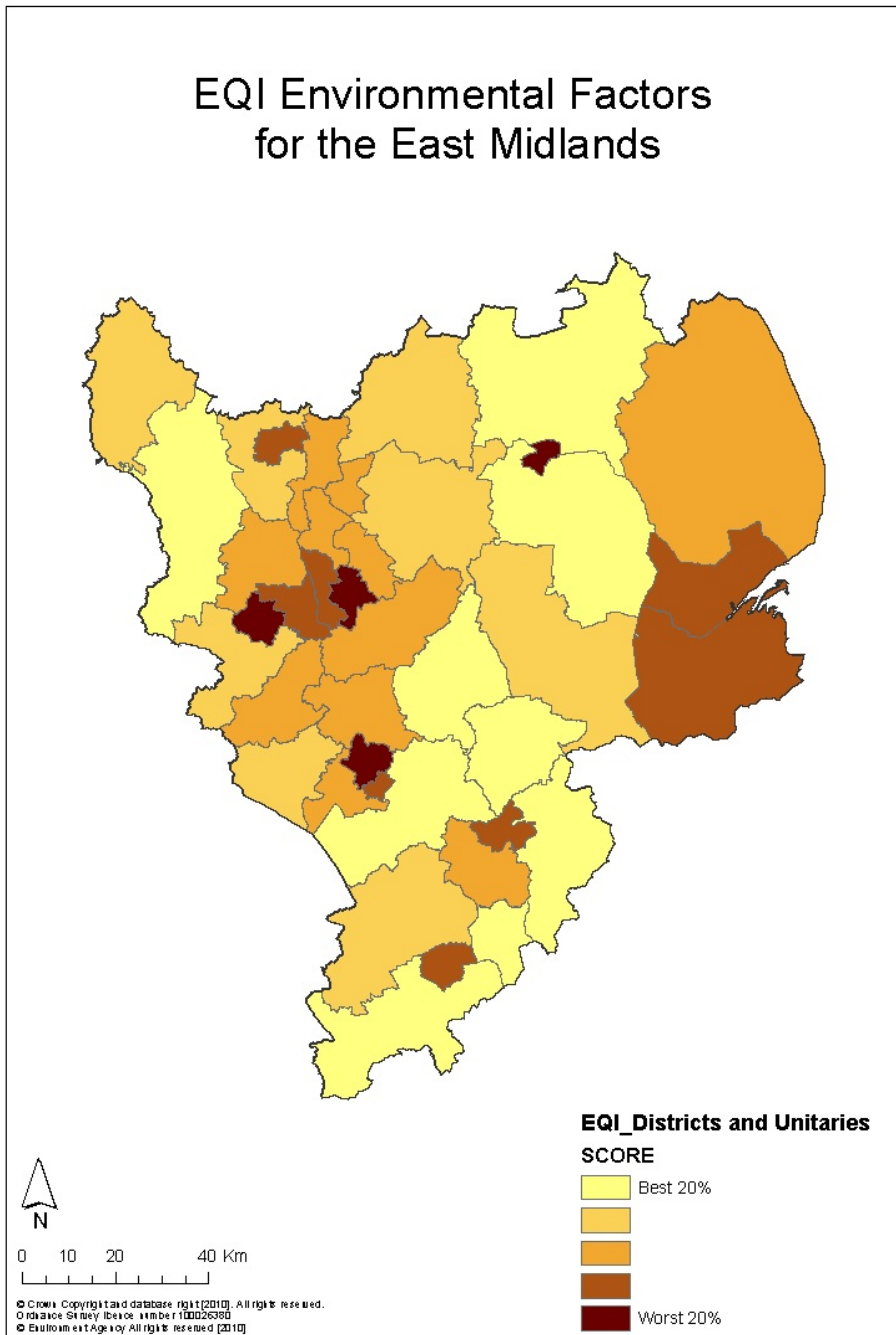
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Data and trends

The map below illustrates the Environmental Quality Index showing the ranking of districts into five categories combining eight environmental factors. These are air quality, derelict land, flood risk, flytipping, green space, proximity to regulated sites, river water quality and semi-natural habitats. The region's cities, Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, and Nottingham have the worst environments but areas near The Wash have particular problems of flood risk.



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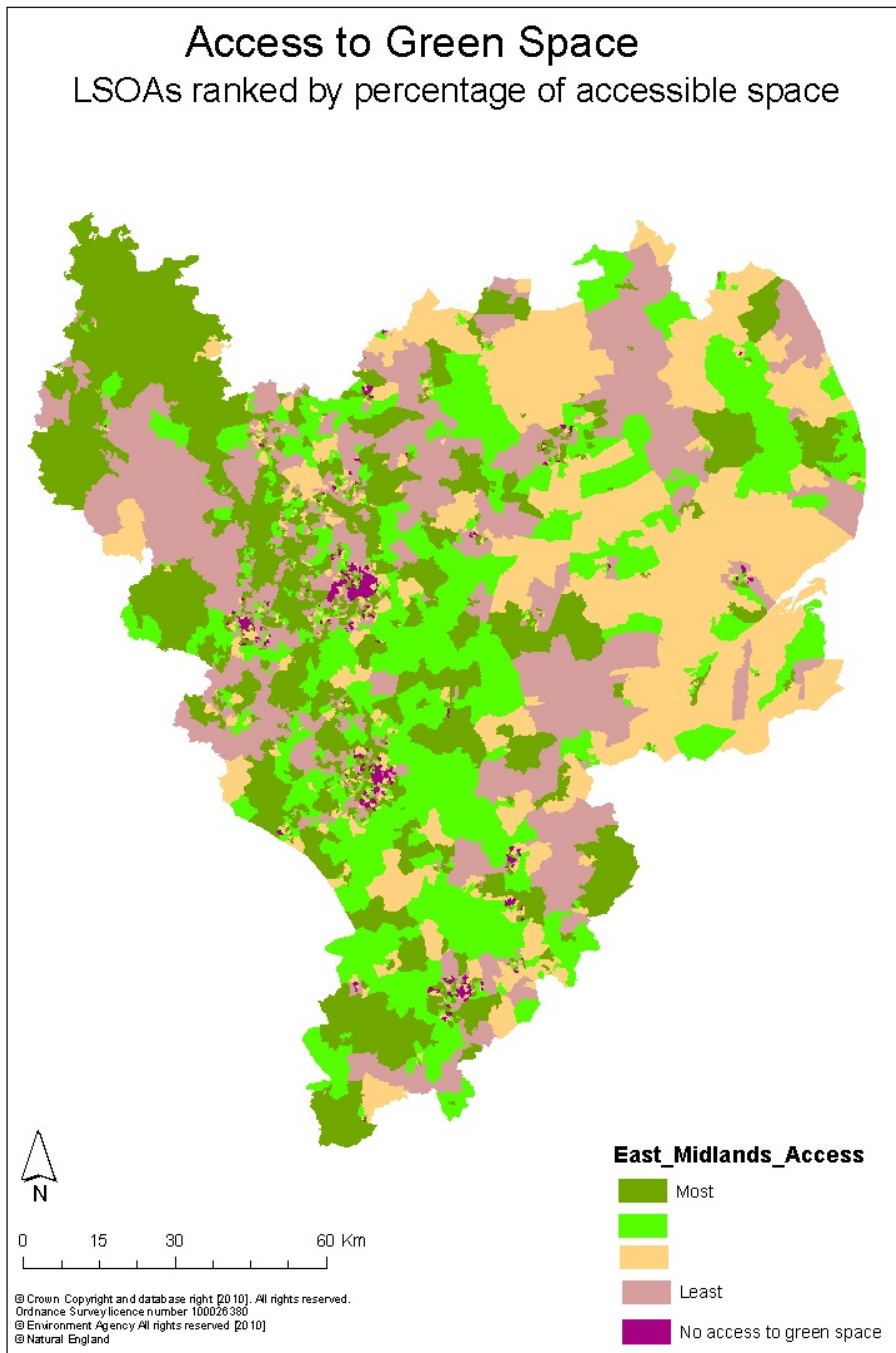
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The map below displays LSOAs ranked according to the percentage of accessible space within them and put into five categories. Accessible space includes natural habitats, parks, paths and cycle ways. The LSOAs with the least amount of space are within the region's largest towns and cities.



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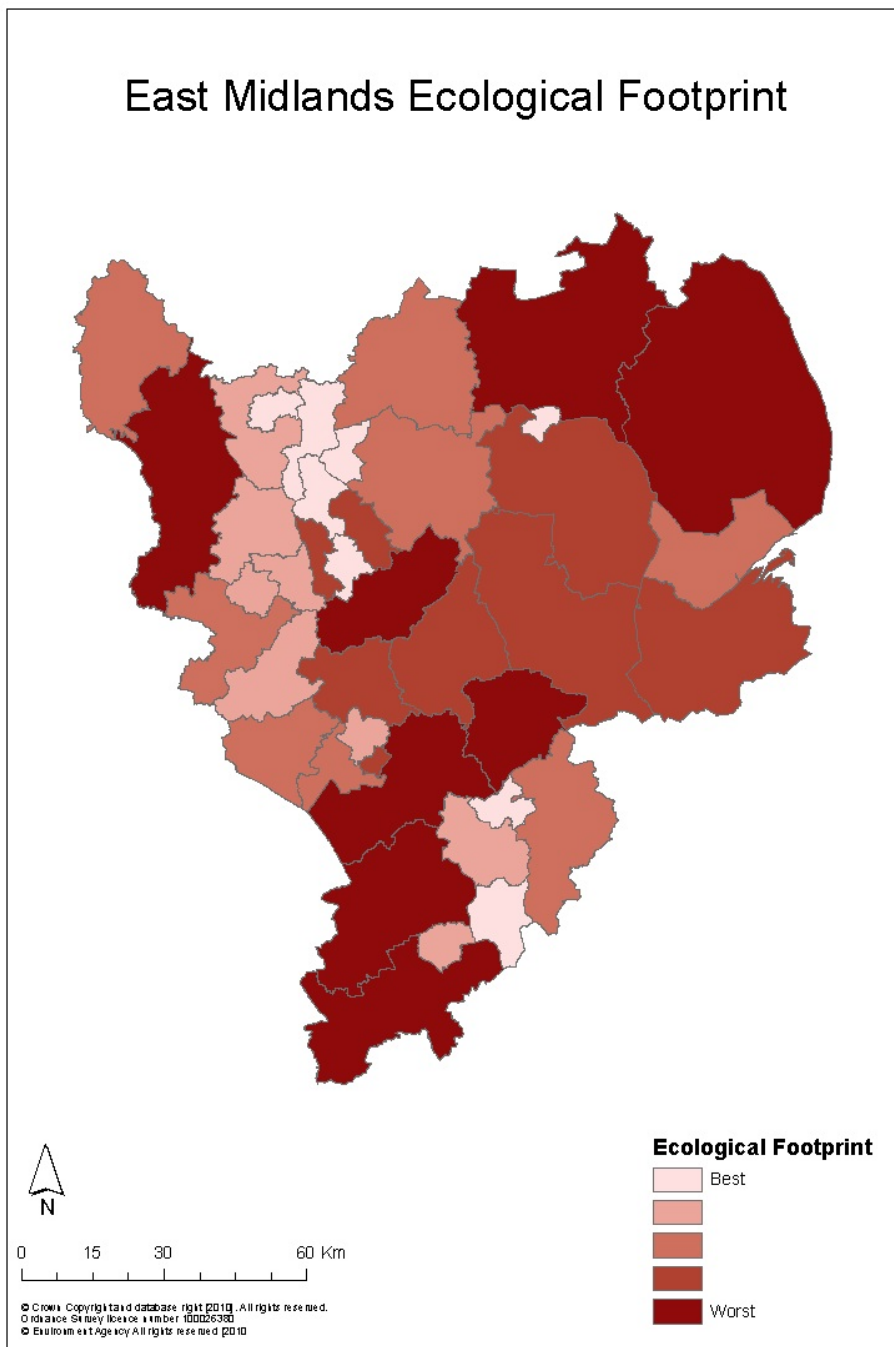
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The ecological footprint map below shows how much productive land and sea is needed to provide the resources, such as energy, water and raw materials, we use in our everyday lives. It is based on consumption, the amount of resources used per person including food and goods imported from abroad. The emissions generated from the oil, coal and gas we burn are calculated, and how much land is required to absorb our waste. The information is available at the district level and has been ranked into five categories.



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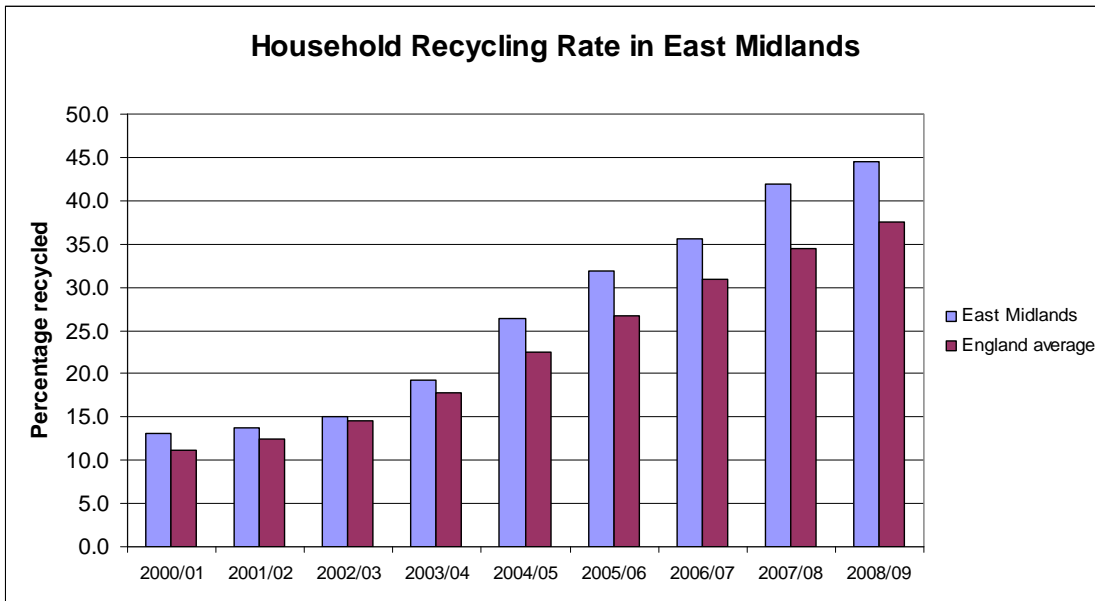
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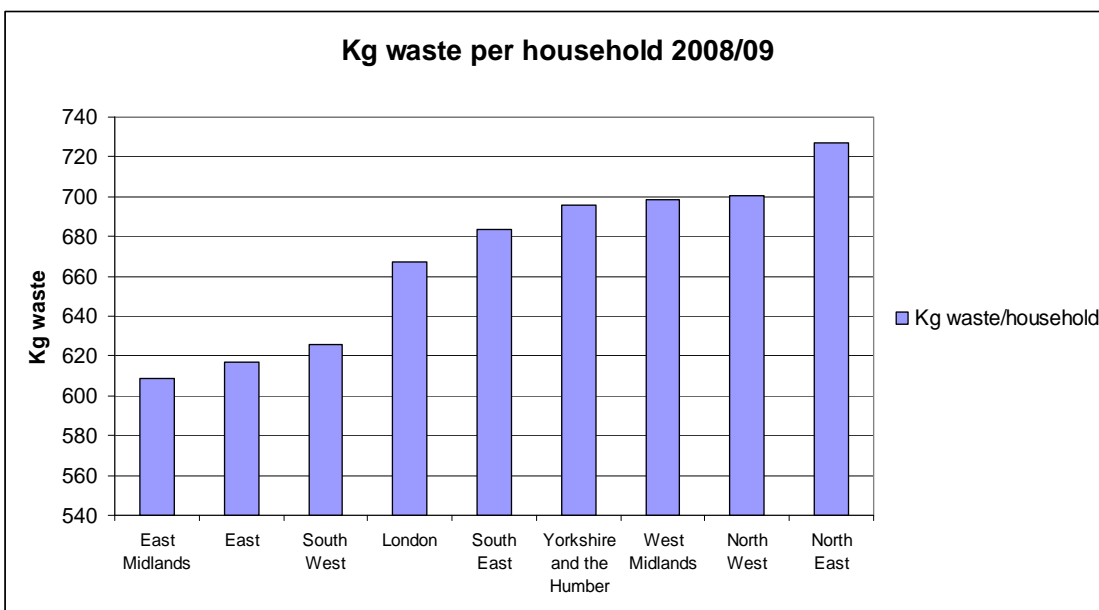
Overall, rural areas tend to have higher values because goods and services cannot be obtained locally. East Midlands has an ecological footprint value of 5.24 global hectares per capita (gh/c) compared with a UK average of 5.3 gh/c. This compares with a global biocapacity of two global hectares per capita, the amount of biologically productive land and sea needed to regenerate resources used. This means each person is using more than twice the resources that can be provided sustainably by the planet.

The following graph shows steady improvement of household recycling rates in this decade although still under the target of 50 per cent. East Midlands recycling is above the national average.

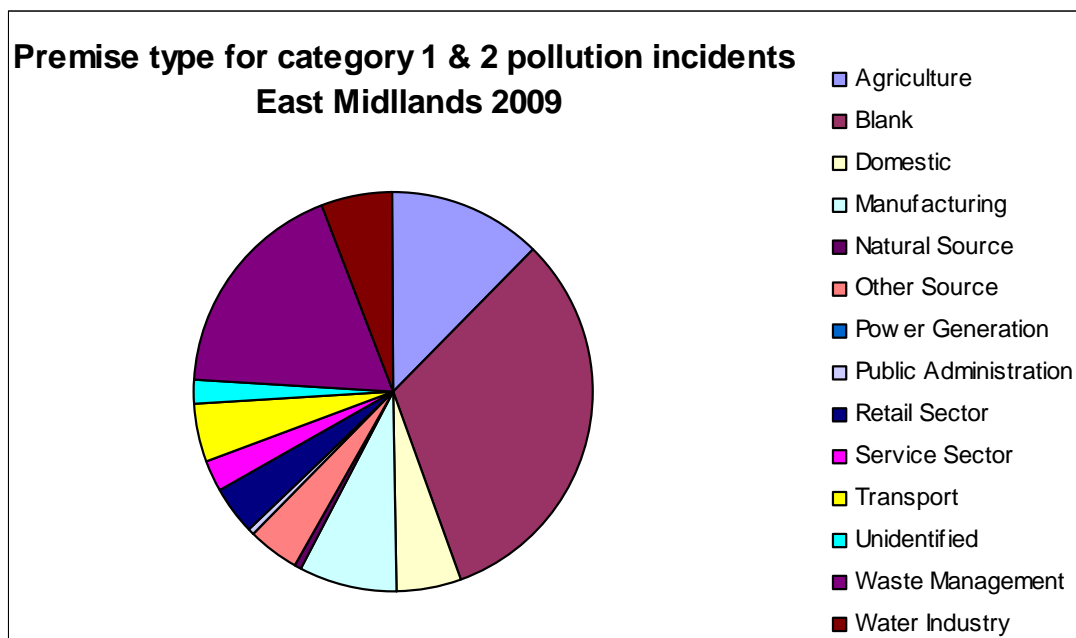


Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Number of dwellings, from CLG Council

East Midlands has the lowest quantity of residual waste per household sent to landfill as shown in the graph below.



The chart below shows there are many different premises responsible for pollution incidents with the most impact on the environment. Waste management and agriculture premise are the most frequently reported sites although one third are not attributed to any one category.



Our role

The Environment Agency is a regulator, operator and influential adviser on the environment in England and Wales. Our interest in planning and the built environment focuses on where these impact on key environmental services – such as water resources and quality, energy use, waste management, biodiversity and flood and coastal risk management – and on people's quality of life.

- We seek to ensure land-use planning processes address environmental challenges, particularly at an early stage by influencing strategic plans.
- We are a statutory consultee for environmental assessments and sustainability appraisals that are part of land-use planning in both England and Wales.
- We will use the planning process to encourage developers to take watercourses out of culverts, provide wider social and economic benefits to local communities through our flood risk schemes.
- We develop partnerships to offer environmental opportunities and achieve regeneration through the master planning process, influence others to introduce environmental enhancements through development, for example, clean up of contaminated sites and use of sustainable drainage.

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