

the sustainable cities index

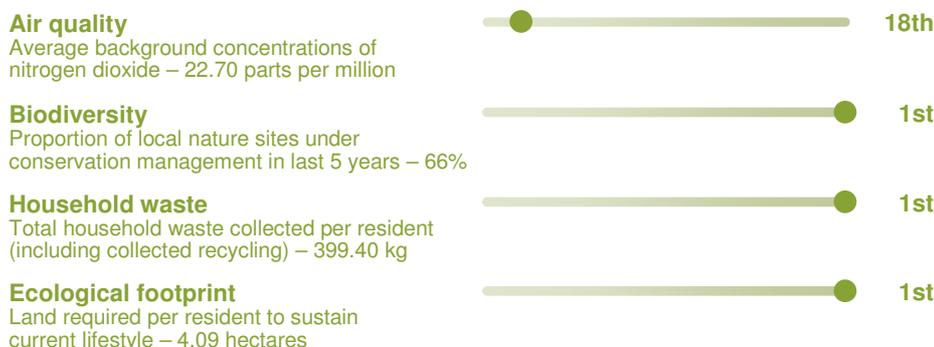
2010 ranking the 20 largest British cities

Leicester overall rank: 2nd

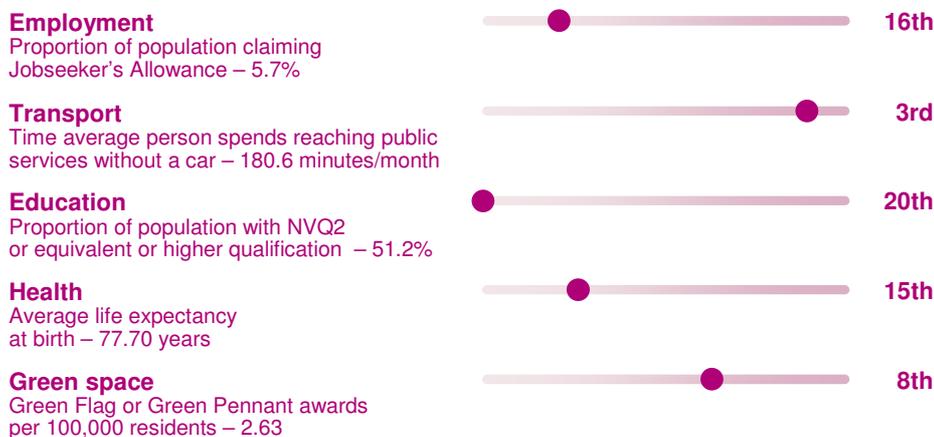
Local authority Leicester City Council (unitary authority)
Political leadership of council Labour
Populationⁱ 304,700
Land areaⁱⁱ 7,334 hectares

Land useⁱⁱⁱ 15% buildings, 14% road and rail, 25% domestic gardens, 36% green spaces (incl. rural)
Population density 41.5 inhabitants/hectare
CO₂ emissions per capita^{iv} 6.3 tons CO₂

environmental performance: 1st



quality of life: 15th



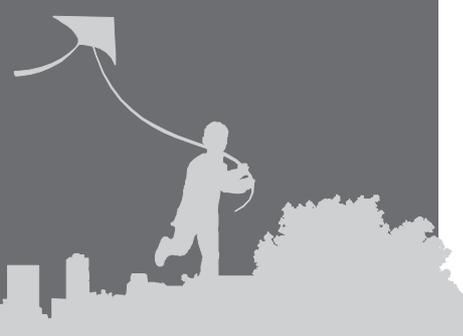
future-proofing: 3rd



The Sustainable Cities Index tracks progress on sustainability in Britain's 20 largest cities, ranking them across three broad baskets: environmental performance; quality of life; and future-proofing – how well they are addressing issues such as climate change, recycling and biodiversity. It provides a snapshot of sustainability in each city, with the aim of encouraging healthy competition, stimulating discussion and suggesting new ways of thinking about cities.

See the full report for all 20 cities and more details about the rankings at www.forumforthefuture.org/projects/sustainable-cities10

The report was produced by Forum for the Future with funding from GE. To find out more about the Index and Forum's work on cities please contact us at sustainablecities@forumforthefuture.org



Forum for the Future analysis

Leicester has improved more than any other city since this index was first published in 2007, rising 12 places to second overall. It is now the top city for environmental performance, although it still scores poorly for quality of life.

Leicester has a relatively high population density and is not richly endowed with sites with high biodiversity, but it has made outstanding progress in managing the complexity and diversity of what biodiversity habitat it has, rising seven places since 2009. It made the key step of designating Biodiversity Enhancement Sites to provide wildlife corridors between isolated nature sites.^v It has also made significant improvements in minimising waste and reducing its ecological footprint to become the only city to come top in three indicators. However, Leicester's air quality is still amongst the worst: a large section of the City Centre and a number of radial roads and sections of the ring road have been declared as air quality management areas in an attempt to address this.

Leicester's quality of life ranking has also risen since 2009. Access to services by walking, bus and cycling has improved.^{vi} The city's green spaces benefit from a committed staff and parks service action plan^{vii} including planting 10,000 new trees.^{viii} Residents also have relatively good opportunities to grow their own food in council allotments – only Newcastle does better. However, unemployment is high, the skills level remains bottom despite a small improvement, and Leicester's life expectancy is well below the UK average, with the gap widening.

Leicester City Council: sustainability in our city

"One Leicester - our community strategy - has a strong sustainability focus, including carbon reduction. The city has continued to work in partnership with other organisations to address carbon reduction and adaptation.

Highlights include: a Buildings Survey and Investment Programme including installation of energy saving measures in leisure centres, predicted to save 1000 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year from 2010/11; developing Carbon Action Plan training for 500 managers to support them in delivering an initial 10% cut in carbon emissions during 2010/11; signing up to the 10:10 campaign we aim to cut our CO₂ by 7-10% from 2009/10 levels by 2010/11.

In the first phase of Building Schools for the Future secondary schools achieved 'excellent' or 'very good' ratings under the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM). We adopted a policy to aim for the same standards in other major construction projects. Planting 6072 trees means we are on target to achieve the 10,000 trees by 2011; we exceeded our target for nature conservation, benefiting two-thirds of Leicester's Local Wildlife Sites; and our new Green Space Strategy will guide further improvements to the quality and accessibility of open spaces."^{ix}

historical ranking in the sustainable cities index

	2010	2009	2008	2007
overall rank	2nd	4th	8th	14th
environmental	1st	3rd=	10th	8th
quality of life	15th	16th	12th=	11th
future-proofing	3rd	1st	6th=	17th

- i. Data from ONS, Table 8 Mid-2009 Population Estimates: Selected age groups for local authorities in the United Kingdom; estimated resident population.
- ii. Data from DCLG www.communities.gov.uk Generalised Land Use Database Statistics for England 2005.
- iii. Data from ONS, Standard Area Measurements land only measurements in hectares
- iv. Data from National Indicator 186 (end user CO₂ emissions in the local authority from the industry and commercial sector, domestic housing and road transport) www.decc.gov.uk
- v. ICLEI case study <http://www.iclei.org/index.php?id=6768>
- vi. Campaign for Better Transport (2010) 2010 Car Dependency Scorecard, http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/campaigns/traffic_reduction/scorecard
- vii. <http://leicester.gov.uk/your-council-services/lc/parks-green-spaces/aboutus/>
- viii. <http://leicester.gov.uk/parks/>
- ix. The council of each city included in the index was asked to provide a short statement about what they are doing to drive forward sustainability.

Forum for the Future

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