

**Table 1.1: Leicestershire and Rutland – key facts**

<p><b>Area:</b> 2553 sq.km (986 sq.miles)</p> <p><b>Distance between boundaries:</b> 72 km (44 miles) N-S; 93 km (57 miles) E-W</p> <p><b>Altitude:</b> mostly between 61 m and 183 m (200-600 ft)</p> <p><b>Highest point:</b> Bardon Hill 278 m (912 ft)</p> <p><b>Lowest point:</b> confluence of Rivers Soar and Trent at 27 m (90 ft)</p> <p><b>Human population:</b> In 2011 the combined population was 1017967, of which 329,839 live in Leicester (source: LeicesterShire Statistics and Research <a href="http://www.lsr-online.org/">http://www.lsr-online.org/</a>)</p> <p><b>Land use:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Farming – 84% of L&amp;R is farmland, 82% of which is Grade 3 quality; 52% of farmland in 1992 grew cereals, oil seed rape etc</li><li>- Woodland – 4% of L&amp;R is covered in woodland, 2% of the counties is ancient woodland, with c 50% of that semi-natural</li><li>- Urban – 6% was urban in 1992; between 1945 and 1990 the area of urban land doubled; W.Leics is much more developed than E.Leics &amp; Rutland</li><li>- Mineral extraction – Leics, Derbys &amp; Somerset are the 3 biggest mineral producing counties in Britain</li></ul> <p><b>Sites of Special Scientific Interest:</b> 95 (81 biological) covering 6438 ha (c. 2.5% of counties, national average is c.6%)</p> <p><b>Nature Conservation Review sites:</b> Cribb's Meadow; Leighfield Forest; Muston Meadows; River Eye; Rutland Water; Swithland Wood</p> <p><b>Geological Conservation Review sites:</b> Charnwood Lodge + others</p> <p><b>Special Areas of Conservation:</b> 1 (River Mease)</p> <p><b>Special Protection Areas:</b> 1 (Rutland Water)</p> <p><b>Ramsar Sites:</b> 1 (Rutland Water)</p> <p><b>Environmentally Sensitive Areas:</b> None</p> <p><b>Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty:</b> None</p> <p><b>National Parks:</b> None.</p> <p><b>Community Forests etc:</b> 1 (The National Forest).</p> <p><b>National Nature Reserves:</b> 3 [Charnwood Lodge, Cribb's Meadow (LRWT); Muston Meadows (NE)].</p> <p><b>Local Nature Reserves:</b> 22</p> <p><b>Other nature reserves:</b> LRWT has 33 reserves covering nearly 3000 acres (1214hectates). 20 are SSSIs; Seaton Meadows SSSI is a Plantlife reserve. The Woodland Trust manages c. 20 sites covering c. 315 ha.</p> <p><b>Local Wildlife Sites:</b> 1167 notified sites, 1108 candidate sites and 1013 potential sites, covering in total 12,350 hectares, or c.4.8% of the area.</p> <p><b>Main reasons for decline in biodiversity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Modern farming methods</li><li>- Development (housing, roads, mineral extraction)</li><li>- Recreational activities</li><li>- Drainage schemes</li><li>- Tidying up and destruction of rough ground and 'brown-field' land</li></ul> <p><i>Michael Jeeves 2010, updated by S Timms, Dec 2016 (highlighted)</i></p>
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