



## October 2024 Ward Report – Old Gore Ward

Parishes of: Brampton Abbots with Sollers Hope and Yatton, Brockhampton with Much Fawley, Foy (East), Foy (West), How Caple, Kings Caple, Much Marcle, Upton Bishop and Woolhope

From your local County Councillor: Barry Durkin

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Dear Parish Councillors and Residents, welcome to this my latest edition of my ward report I hope you find it interesting and there is a 'useful information' section at the end. This report is prepared from information from Herefordshire Council and other councillor sources so that I may provide a comprehensive review of the County activities.

Unfortunately the summer sunshine has turned back to masses of rain and although the forecast ahead looks to be improving nothing is guaranteed so please do be careful when travelling as heavy showers often lead to slippery road surfaces. Please take care when driving especially through standing water.

### Council Matters

The Council accounts for 2023/24 were approved by the Audit and Governance committee last week and can now be officially signed off by the auditors. There is a real capacity issue in England about local authority auditors but despite this Herefordshire should be one of the first councils to publish audited accounts before the government deadline.

### Housing Supply

The Council has responded to the government's proposals on new housing targets where Herefordshire is expected to increase its house building over the next 20 years from 773 to 1,375 per year.



The point is made that there is unlikely to be a local market demand for that quantity, and there isn't the capacity within the local building market to deliver that number. In a county with high house prices and lower incomes the delivery of more affordable homes will

become an issue as the market focusses on 3/4 bedroom detached residences rather than smaller family homes. You all know my views also about building more suitable homes for the maturing population.

Councils have to show that they have a five year supply of building land and if they can't then sites not identified through open processes can start to get permission. The high level of projected numbers would increase the risk of this.

Herefordshire is one of England's most rural counties and is relatively lacking in public transport infrastructure with only four railway stations and traffic congestion. Rural bus services require continued support and subsidy. It has a higher proportion (21%) who travel 20km or more, compared to England and Wales (15%). This level of growth will mean increased commuting as the county is more limited with economic options. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head of population which is a measure of relative economic prosperity, is significantly lower than the national GDP. The county doesn't have the economic base to work with such high housing targets. More employment land and significant infrastructure will need to be planned to avoid unsustainable commuting.

Key sectors in Herefordshire, which need further support and nurturing include:

- Agriculture and food production
- Cyber and technology, (building on locational factors and links the SAS and Signals Regiments)
- Tourism and creative industries
- Manufacturing and engineering
- Construction
- Healthcare
- Renewable energy - Retro fits/energy efficient

Infrastructure plays a large part in this level of delivery and it would work better if organisations such as the water companies and utility providers were more aligned to future growth ambitions but their plans do not work in the same way. They should be better at considering strategic and Local Plans; if growth is the ambition of central government.

The existing highway system has issues that need urgent investment if more house building is to be delivered. There will need also need to be more public investment in health care including Dentistry.

If the government are sensible they may well revisit the high number allocated initially and reduce it but it will still leave the problems outlined above; which remain needing urgent attention.

### **National Fire Memorial service**



A matter dear to my heart being a retired fire officer in London. A wreath on behalf of the Hereford & Worcester Fire Service in memory of firefighters who lost their lives while protecting others was made by the chairman of the council. The service was attended by representatives all the English Fire Authorities and importantly members of families of lost firefighters.

The Memorial is at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas near Burton on Trent in Staffordshire and is the national focus of remembering primary military but also other public service organisations people lost in action or peacetime. Admission

is free although booking a time slot is sensible - I would recommend a visit. More details at the [nma.org.uk](http://nma.org.uk)

## **Poppy appeal 2024**

Each year, in early November many volunteers throughout the towns and villages of Herefordshire generously give their time to collect in Supermarkets, in Schools and on our roads and streets helping to raise thousands of pounds for the Poppy Appeal.

[Homepage - Herefordshire - \(britishlegion.org.uk\)](http://britishlegion.org.uk)

## **Flooding and Immediate Emergency Relief**

Flooding has affected several areas of the county this week following torrential rainfall. Last weekend a month's worth of rain fell in just three hours and the sheer volume of water meant that some systems were overwhelmed. The further heavy rain over the past few days has meant we've been dealing with ongoing issues throughout the week in Ross-on-Wye. Our highways teams have been on the ground taking action to reduce standing water where possible and supporting the clear-up as Ross has received a phenomenal amount of rainfall which has overtaken the ability for the drains to take it away.

I'm sure you'll join me to thank everyone who worked throughout the weekend and overnight this week to respond including members of the highways team, emergency planning team and communications team.

With further flooding expected this winter, we're asking for information to be shared with us about which areas were flooded on this occasion, as this will help us to plan. This can be reported on our website at [Flood management – Herefordshire Council](#).

There's lots of information about how to prepare for future flooding on our website and there are several links in the article below for you to share through your community networks. We would particularly like to stress that the council doesn't provide sandbags so these need to be sourced from local builder's merchants.

If you or you know of anyone affected by the recent flooding and is in need of £250 to cover immediate emergency items, the **Herefordshire Community Foundation's Emergency Relief Fund** is now available. Please see the article below for details of how to contact them.

### **Herefordshire Community Foundation's Emergency Flood Fund**

Herefordshire Community Foundation's (HCF) Emergency Relief Fund offers much needed support when disaster strikes. In light of recent flooding across the county, immediate financial support is available to households affected. This can be used to help with urgent needs such as the cost of living in temporary accommodation, purchasing items required to help people stay in their homes, such as dehumidifiers, and replacing damaged food, clothing or bedding.

Grants of up to £250 are available for affected households, with larger grants available for projects providing relief support for affected communities.

If you or someone you know needs an emergency grant, then please complete the application form on the [HCF website](#), or call on 01432 272550.

### **Parish Council – drainage support**

Herefordshire Council has offered £445,000 to Parish Council to work on small drainage



schemes with the parish lengths man which I believe offers good value and opportunity to deal with local problems. I am pleased to see some of my PCs take this up.

### **New pre-application planning system**

Herefordshire residents and businesses can now make use of the council's newly improved pre-application planning advice service.

[New pre-application planning system now live – Herefordshire Council](#)

### **Grant funding opportunities**

Talk Community's Grant Finder tool is a one stop shop for funding information, providing continuously updated funding opportunities. The grant finder enables you to browse the different grants which are available, whether you are a charity, social enterprise, community group or parish council. Offering access to thousands of funds available on a European, national and regional basis.

If you have a specific project in mind, you can search for those funding opportunities which may be most relevant to you and once you are signed up, you can receive updates of new funding opportunities.

[Explore the grant finding tool now.](#)

### **Tour of Museum Services**

This October, Herefordshire Museum Service invites visitors to see behind-the-scenes at the Hereford Museum & Library building on Broad Street, Hereford

[Behind-the-Scenes Tours: See what's been happening at Hereford Museum & Art Gallery – Herefordshire Council](#)

### **Herefordshire Holiday's - Provider Applications Opening Soon**

Here for Herefordshire Holiday's is back for Christmas 2024, and we're looking for new providers!

Funded by the Department for Education, the programme offers a fantastic range of indoor and outdoor activities to school aged children (reception to year 11) who are eligible for benefit related school meals.

This year we're encouraging new and existing providers to apply, so if you believe you, or an organisation you know, could provide an activity for children and young people later

this year, then please get in touch! All places will be funded so it's a great opportunity to do something good for the children of Herefordshire and get paid.

Applications open on Monday 30th September. Please contact [HAF@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:HAF@herefordshire.gov.uk) for more details.

### **Household Support Fund – Please Share!**

Could you help people in your community by raising awareness of the Household Support Fund?

The Household Support Fund provides funding to support a wide range of low-income households, including families with children of all ages, pensioners, care leavers and disabled people. Support includes food vouchers, help with energy bills and other essential costs.

If you work for an organisation with an outreach to those in need, then we highly recommend you take a look at the different funding options that are available and share far and wide!



Funded by  
UK Government

For more information, please visit the [Herefordshire Council website](#).

### **'HereForD shire' Festival**



The Living Room, Hereford have been busy making big plans!

The [HereForD shire Festival](#) kicks off on Thursday October 10th, World Homeless Day, and aims to raise awareness of different types of homelessness, as well as raising funds to provide support for those affected in Herefordshire.

There's plenty planned for the festival, including an art exhibition, a Charity Gala night (early bird tickets now available) and The Big Sleep Out at the Left Bank, Hereford.

For more information about how you can get involved in the events or to put on your own event contact [fundraising@ethos.uk.com](mailto:fundraising@ethos.uk.com)

If you are planning events for World Homeless Day, we would love to hear about them. Please contact us at [talkcommunityengagement@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:talkcommunityengagement@herefordshire.gov.uk)

### **Stop smoking services to receive national funding**

Herefordshire is set to benefit from national funding aimed at enhancing local stop smoking services. Local authorities like Herefordshire Council, that maintain their current stop smoking services, will receive additional funding to expand and reach more people, especially in groups with higher smoking rates

[Stop smoking services to receive national funding – Herefordshire Council](#)

## POLICE

I chaired the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel last week and we discussed the upcoming Police and Crime Plan. This document will be issued soon and is well worth the read about policing into the future of Herefordshire. However we have incidents of serious crime in our area, so please keep your eyes alert to any strange vehicles and behaviours. One of the team contacts details are below and they urge you sign up to the police alerts.

[SNT - Kirsten Kysow 07773 034152](#)

### Sign up to police alerts,



You can choose which areas you want to hear about and what activity is taking place in that area. You'll also hear about positive police action, good news stories and be able to play an active part in helping us with our public appeals.

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/bb21d405/UARq0VNajkqv1vLf0zKSJQ?u=http://www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk/>

## DOORSTEP SCAMS - Beware

These were around long before Scammers took to the Internet but do still exist today. Basically, these are cold callers on your doorstep either selling goods and services, or, has been reported recently, attempting to buy high value items on the doorstep such as gold, silver, jewellery or antiques.

Everyone has come across at some time those persons trying to sell cleaning materials backed up by a story of being an ex-offender and trying to make a new life. Or it may have been the “tradesman” offering to repair or clean your roof, clean your block paving or re-lay your tarmac drive.

Dealing with someone face to face on the doorstep puts the householder under extra pressure and these scammers will always try and smooth talk you, or pressure you, into agreeing to something you never really wanted.

### So how can you protect yourself?

- Firstly, always be on your guard and be suspicious of anyone turning up out of the blue and uninvited – a sign at the door saying uninvited callers not welcome can often help
- Never let any stranger into your home, and also be aware of distraction callers when one person keeps you talking, whilst their partner goes around the back of the property to gain entry
- Use of Smart Doorbells with cameras are a good deterrent, and also gives you the facility to talk to them without opening the door
- Anyone selling goods door to door should be in possession of a “Pedlar’s Licence” which you can ask to see
- Always ask for an ID to prove they, and their business, are genuine
- Never be rushed into signing up for a deal, and always ask for written quotations on their company headed notepaper so you can check they are genuine; it is also helpful to ask for references for a tradesman’s previous customers
- You can also get your Utility Companies to set up a Password so then you know



when someone claiming to be from the Electric, Gas, Telephone or Water Company is genuine

- If the caller remains persistent then call the Police, either 999 if urgent, or 101 if you do not feel in immediate danger

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*Please feel free to share this information with any family, friends, or neighbours that you think it may be able to assist.*

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### **Take Five to Stop Fraud - Beware**

**STOP:** Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

**CHALLENGE:** Could it be fake? It's OK to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

**PROTECT:** Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud

#### **ALWAYS REMEMBER:**

- Avoid disclosing security details
- Emails, Phone Calls and Texts may not be authentic
- Always make direct contact with any organisation by using a genuine phone number
- Stop and Challenge any unexpected requests
- Protect others by reporting Fraud and Scams

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*If you've fallen for a scam,*

**Report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or via [actionfraud.police.uk](http://actionfraud.police.uk)**

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**Scam Text messages** can be forwarded to **7726** to help phone providers take early action and block numbers that generate spam on their networks. You can also report Scam mobile calls by texting **7726 with the word "Call"** followed by the scam caller's phone number.

**Forward Fake Emails** received to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

If you think your bank account or personal banking details have been used fraudulently, then use the short phone number - **159** - to contact the Fraud Prevention Department of most major UK banks.

### **Road Safety**

Last year, across West Mercia police force area, 56 people lost their lives in collisions and 468 people suffered serious injuries, just under a quarter of these involved someone between the age of 16-24. Common causation factors listed in these collisions include:

- Speeding or inappropriate speed
- Distractions, such as mobile phone
- Driving under the influence of drink or drugs

- Not wearing a seatbelt.

Keeping those who use our roads safe is a year-round priority and enforcing the law around these issues takes place across Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire 24/7.



Following a successful operation in July where 1333 road offences were detected and 12,000 motorists caught speeding in our area, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) will be focusing on 'Operation Spotlight' from 23 September – 6 October. The national operation will recognise the

significant contributory factor these issues have in road traffic collisions, in particular with younger drivers/riders and will highlight the work that we do every day to tackle these.

To find out more visit [Operation Spotlight highlights the 'Fatal Four' and younger drivers | West Mercia Police](#)

As ever if I can be of any help please don't hesitate to contact

*Barry*

[bdurkin@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:bdurkin@herefordshire.gov.uk)

### Police and Community Safety



**Sign up to police alerts**, you can choose which areas you want to hear about and what activity is taking place in that area. You'll also hear about positive police action, good news stories and be able to play an active part in

helping us with our public appeals.

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/bb21d405/UARq0VNajkqv1vLf0zKSJQ?u=http://www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk/>

### Report a crime Police 101 Ext 61216

The new General data protection regulations (GDPR) that supersede the Data Protection act, came into force on the 25th May 2018 and places obligations and responsibilities on any company, organisation and individual who holds and process personnel information. I make this statement that I hold a list of emails of local people that I have built up over the years which I retain and use. In seeking legal compliance I am requesting that if anyone is unhappy with me holding your email contact please advise me and I will remove you from the list. Otherwise I will retain your email contact and continue to send you monthly updates and occasional key information

### Flooding: emergency contact details – please share with your networks

Environment Agency: 0800 80 70 60 (24-hours) or visit [www.gov.uk/report-an-environmental-incident](http://www.gov.uk/report-an-environmental-incident)



Flood alerts: Floodline 0345 988 1188. Sign up online at [www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings](http://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings) to get Flood Warnings from the Environment Agency by phone, email or text message. If you live by a river or stream, keep a watch on current and expected water levels.

Power cut: Call 105 or visit [www.powercut105.com](http://www.powercut105.com)

BT phone line issues: [www.downdetector.co.uk/status/bt-british-telecom](http://www.downdetector.co.uk/status/bt-british-telecom)

Gas leak: 0800 111 999 or visit [www.wvutilities.co.uk/services/smell-gas](http://www.wvutilities.co.uk/services/smell-gas)

### **Has your property been affected by flooding? – Please share with your networks**

Welsh Water: 0800 052 0130 (Water emergencies) or 0800 085 3968 (Sewer emergencies) or visit [www.contact.dwrcymru.com/](http://www.contact.dwrcymru.com/)

Severn Trent water: 0800 783 4444 [www.stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/check-my-area/](http://www.stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/check-my-area/)

Report a flooded road or highway obstruction- Balfour Beatty Living Places: **01432 2618000**

By letting us know where and what happened, especially if it hasn't been reported, we and our partners can use the information which may help reduce the future impacts of flooding.

### **Talk Community**

**Email:** [Talkcommunitycovidresponse@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Talkcommunitycovidresponse@herefordshire.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** 01432 260027

### **Potholes, Defects, and dog poo reporting, blocked gullies, etc. online**

If you have a general service request, i.e. if you want to report a pothole etc., please use the link above, or call us, rather than emailing your steward. Using the link or the phone number ensures that the enquiry is dealt with promptly and efficiently. Locality Stewards do not have the resource to be able to deal with service requests via email although of course they are happy to provide general guidance and support to you through email. As always please continue to make use and encourage the use of established reporting methods for any highways defect; online, or using the telephone app – for potholes, dog poo - Telephone customer services on **01432 261 800**.

Please note that Herefordshire Council strongly encourages Balfour Beatty to promote all service requests and queries should be logged via the HC website at Herefordshire Council website - also download the pothole App to help report potholes as you see them.

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes>

[https://link.edgepilot.com/s/e3b2b34e/ttjzBlvIfEewR-](https://link.edgepilot.com/s/e3b2b34e/ttjzBlvIfEewR-39NN73dA?u=https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole)

[39NN73dA?u=https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole](https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole)

<https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole> or

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/190/report\\_problems\\_on\\_the\\_road](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/190/report_problems_on_the_road)

Please use the website or call the customer services call handling team. This will help ensure that everything is logged in to the operating system known as CONFIRM where it can be responded to in a timely way.

### **Report fly tippers**

If you spot someone fly-tipping

- ⊗ Make a note of any vehicle used, including model, colour and registration number. If it is safe to do so without being seen, take a photograph or video of the activity
- ⊗ Note the fly tippers' clothes, and distinguishing features. If you can hear the fly tippers, take note of anything which was said along with the speakers' accents
- ⊗ Make a note of what they dumped, the location, weather conditions and how far away you were at the time;
- ⊗ You may report fly tipping on an app on the website and available for download.

Please send us this information by using the [report fly tipping form](#).

## Footpaths and Public Rights of Way

For any PROW (Public Rights of Way) maps or problems, you can report these via the following link on the Herefordshire Council's website: [Report a public right of way problem | Herefordshire](#)

## Did you know...?

You can follow our Twitter feed @HfdsStreets for 24/7 updates for all things highways; or, log on to <https://roadworks.org> to see any live traffic incidents as well as current and planned road closures, diversions, traffic restrictions and roadworks

Parishes Councils have their own inbox for emails which are monitored by teams in the office to ensure cover at all times. If you have an emergency to report please use 01432 261800 as this is answered 24/7.

To identify road numbers, or to see if publicly maintained or to view Public Rights of Way:

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200136/travel\\_and\\_transport/716/highways\\_and\\_public\\_rights\\_of\\_way\\_map](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200136/travel_and_transport/716/highways_and_public_rights_of_way_map)

The highways maintenance plan – which sets out the council's system of road inspection, maintenance and repairs, including timescales:

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5210/highway\\_maintenance\\_plan\\_october\\_2016.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5210/highway_maintenance_plan_october_2016.pdf)

Toolkits:

Community commissioning

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/18820/community\\_commissioning\\_model\\_toolkit.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/18820/community_commissioning_model_toolkit.pdf)

Litter picking

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/14134/community\\_litter\\_pick\\_toolkit.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/14134/community_litter_pick_toolkit.pdf)

Traffic Regulation Orders

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2891/application\\_toolkit\\_for\\_traffic\\_regulation\\_orders.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2891/application_toolkit_for_traffic_regulation_orders.pdf)

SIDs [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1859/speed\\_indicator\\_device\\_toolkit.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1859/speed_indicator_device_toolkit.pdf)

Another useful site:

For information on current and future planned roadworks by utility companies [www.roadworks.org](http://www.roadworks.org)

Please do follow BBLP on Twitter for up to date information about road closures, ongoing work etc., and [@HfdsStreets](https://twitter.com/HfdsStreets) and if you need help to set that up please let me know.

If you wish to make a claim as a result of damage to your vehicle

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/206/highway\\_claimsplease use](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/206/highway_claimsplease use)

## Council tax reduction or exemption

You can get money off your Council Tax bill, or even pay nothing, in certain circumstances. A discount or exemption depends on your current situation and circumstances, but does not take account of income or savings. If you are on a low income, you may also be able to get help to pay your bill through Council Tax Reduction. We will need to assess your financial and other circumstances to see what help you qualify for.

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200146/council\\_tax/39/council\\_tax\\_reduction](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200146/council_tax/39/council_tax_reduction)