

Ward Report – February 2023
From your local Neighbourhood Champion – Ward Councillor Barry Durkin

Old Gore Ward

Brampton Abbots, Brockhampton with Much Fawley, How Caple, Kings Caple, Much Marcle, Upton Bishop and Woolhope.

Dear Parish Councillors and Residents, welcome to this edition of my ward report I hope you find it interesting and there is a 'useful information' section at the end.



Dear resident,

As usual this ward report provides information relating to Herefordshire and primarily for Old Gore Ward and its parish councils. Hopefully, the messages provided will still give you information and details on where to find further details and/or how to report issues.

To enable this report I have consulted with many sources including information provided by other councillors. This month (February) I chaired the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner's Panel. The main topic at this meeting is, as usual for a February, the police precept – which we have scrutinised. The Panel will provide a formal response to the Police and Crime Commissioner and based on the response and in due course he will submit his precept to the people of West Mercia, which includes Herefordshire. In addition on 10th February the Council comes together to discuss the future precept for the council tax.

Please forward this update to any residents in the ward who you think may be interested and copy me in. As ever if you think I can be of help please do not hesitate to contact me. Stay safe and keep well everybody.

Barry

Local government elections on 4 May 2023

The last local government elections in Herefordshire were held in 2019. Herefordshire's next scheduled elections will take place on **Thursday 4 May 2023**, where all 53 district wards and 133 parish/town councils will hold elections for new members.

[Elections 4 May 2023 – Herefordshire Council](#)

Postal and proxy voting

Many voters today prefer to vote by post. If you will be away on polling day, at work or on holiday, are physically unable or just don't have the time to get to a polling station to vote in person, you can still exercise your democratic right to vote. You may have moved house since the electoral register was drawn up and have not yet joined the register at your new address. For your convenience, you now have the right to vote by post.

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New arrangements allow anyone who is on the Register of Electors to apply for a postal vote at any election. However, you must be registered under Individual Electoral Registration to apply to vote by post or proxy. Remember if you can't get to your polling station for whatever reason, you can apply for a postal vote but you must be registered under Individual Electoral Registration first.

Download a [postal vote application form](#) and return it to electoral services by post or by hand.

The deadline for the receipt of new postal vote applications or to change or cancel an existing postal applications for all elections is 11 working days prior to polling day. Postal vote ballot papers are normally sent out about a week before the election.

Voter ID required – for first time at election



For the first time residents in Herefordshire will need to show photographic ID to vote at this year's local elections. Residents are being urged to make sure they are ready to vote in May by checking they have an accepted form of ID.

The requirement to show photo ID at the polling station is introduced by the UK Government's Elections Act which was passed last year and comes into effect for the first time this May. This will affect all electors who vote in person or by proxy, at the next local Council elections on Thursday 4 May 2023 Electors or their proxy must bring a suitable form of photographic ID to their polling station before they are given a ballot paper. If someone doesn't have accepted photo ID, they can apply for a free voter ID document, which is known as a Voter Authority Certificate (VAC).

The electoral commission are running a campaign which we will be supporting to remind people they need to have accepted Photo ID in place in order to vote or they will need to apply for a VAC

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id/accepted-forms-photo-id>

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/elections-1/forthcoming-elections-referendums/8>

[Herefordshire residents need photo ID to vote at elections in May – Herefordshire Council](#)

Call for volunteers – my re-election

At this point I would like to inform you of my intention to stand again for Ward Councillor for Old Gore Ward on Herefordshire Council– our ward!

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To assist me I would like to ask for support and assistance from parishioners **in all seven parishes** to help me with running at the local election on **Thursday 4th May 2023**. I would be obliged if any resident, not necessarily living in the ward, would like to help me to be re-elected. My request includes parish councillors and clerks but not acting in their parish council role, again I would be obliged for their assistance. If anybody wishes to help me please contact by my mobile or using the email address Barry4oldgore@btinternet.com. I would ask that all those, without a parish council communications facility, advertise this personal request for assistance widely.

There is an important caveat and see this below in red:

All residents, both in the parish or outside may assist a candidate in an election. However, Parish Councillors: please be advised that this request is ultimately addressing a political event and parish councils are, as a body, non-political. Therefore, it is not permitted for parish councillors or parish clerks acting as parish representatives, in their official capacity, to assist.

Notwithstanding, parish councillors may assist my re-election, if they wish, in a personal capacity. No advertisement or any message relating to my re-election as County Councillor should be displayed on or using any official parish council website, notice board or other official parish council communication means.

Census details for Herefordshire economy

Following last year's ten year census I share with you the figures on population and our Herefordshire economy

- An ageing population has driven a fall in economic activity, with rising numbers of people who are retired - 59% of Herefordshire's usual residents aged 16 and over were either working or seeking work in the week before the census 2021, down from 63% in 2011.
- Over a quarter (28%) of usual residents aged 16 years and over were economically inactive because of retirement (compared with 22% nationally).
- 12% of all 16+ year-olds in Herefordshire are self-employed – one of the top 10% rates out of all local authorities across England and Wales.
- Herefordshire's working residents were more likely to work in agriculture, forestry and fishing than in England and Wales as a whole (5% compared with 1% - the tenth highest rate in the country).

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- The lockdown meant that significantly more people in employment worked mainly at or from home than in 2011 (26% compared with 6%).

You can explore the data yourself using the [Census maps](#) on the ONS website.

Covid-19 update

I continue to include contact details for matters relating to COVID. There is still local and national Covid-19 information and support available.

Local information: [Herefordshire Council website](#)

Local vaccinations: [Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group website](#)

National guidance: [Government website](#)

Urgent medication supplies: [NHS website](#) / call NHS 111

Talk Community helpline: The helpline is still available to help residents, who don't have support from family, friends or their local community, with food supplies, medication delivery or befriending (this includes those who are self-isolating).

Call: 01432 260027

E-mail: talkcommunityhelpline@herefordshire.gov.uk

Online: [Coronavirus - Talk Community support](#)

Avian Flu – a serious danger to all bird life



Avian flu affects all birds – domestic, intensive and wildlife. There have now been several outbreaks in Herefordshire and neighbouring counties. Mandatory housing measures for all poultry and captive birds in all areas of England and now Wales.

The housing measures legally require all bird keepers to keep their birds indoors and to follow stringent biosecurity measures to help protect their flocks from the disease, regardless of type or size. Over the last year, the United Kingdom has faced its largest ever outbreak of avian influenza with hundreds of cases confirmed including in our parishes.

More details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu> or further information may be found at [Bird flu alert – Herefordshire Council](#)

Funding from Government – levelling up Fund

Herefordshire Council has recently received circa £20 million from the Government from the Levelling up Fund. Part has gone towards the cost of a transport hub by the railway station – a long standing ambition of the council for 20 years and one of the reasons the link road was

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built between Edgar Street and Aylestone hill. The Transport Hub is currently projected to cost £10 million.

The rest of the funding is to be spend on various cycle ways in the city and to the Rotherwas business park. Unfortunately the case wasn't made for improved investment at Ross Model Farm Business Park, or in Leominster. The fact that a National grant aiming to equalise employment opportunities and improve incomes across England misses the projects to create jobs but is spent on modal shift in the city only reflects the current council's priorities.

Rural cost of Living – Household Survey

Last year I took on the chair of the Rural Services Network which lobbies on behalf of rural communities, rural organisations and local authorities. To support a greater understanding and add evidence to our argument for more funding for rural pressures, we are looking for rural residents to complete a Rural Cost of Living Household Survey. Research shows there are different and extra pressures on rural household budgets compared to urban and we want to explore that. Whatever your income or financial position is we need to demonstrate the extra cost pressures. This will help us engage more effectively with Government departments, MPs and other policy makers.

The survey can be found at the following

link: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Rural_Households_Cost-of-Living

Childrens Services

The Government's appointed commissioner over Herefordshire Children's services Eleanor Brazil has submitted her report to the Secretary of State, and it will be considered by Claire Coutinho MP (Minister for Children, families and wellbeing). The poor performance over the last couple of years in particularly after extra investment has been a concern, but since her appointment in late summer there has been signs of improvement, and retaining Eleanor Brazil as overseeing commissioner of the council service for an extended period would seem to be a most positive option.

Council Tax

Following consultation over Christmas the council's cabinet are recommending an increase in council tax of 4.99% - 2.99% increase in core council tax plus 2% adult care precept which would raise an additional 2.5 million pounds to support pressures in the social care budget. The increase is equivalent to a band D charge of £1,786.61. In addition Police, Fire service and Parish Council precepts will be added. The finance council meeting will be held on next Friday 10th February 2023.

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Hereford City Master Plan

The Council has had a consultation on the Hereford City Master Plan which proposes an eastern crossing of the river Wye but no eastern bypass. The Plan will have a formal public consultation in the summer and puts a greater emphasis on active travel of Cycling and walking but my concern is also the link of the rural communities to our main service centre of Hereford.

Neighbourhood Matters from West Mercia Police

Do you want to know what's going on in your area?

Our COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS



When you sign up to our 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/>

Meet your safer neighbourhood team

We are a dedicated group of police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) who work with local communities and partner organisations to keep our residents, businesses and visitors safe and to prevent crime and tackle anti-social behaviour in your locality.

Officers can be contacted on the below numbers concerning community issues. To report a crime in progress call 999 and for non emergencies, report online at www.westmercia.police.uk/report. If you are unable to report online, you can contact us via the 101 non-emergency number.



Whilst the information is considered to be true and correct at the date of publication, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of the information (February 2022).



www.westmercia.police.uk

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The [Neighbourhood Matters](#) messaging service enables residents, businesses and community groups to keep in touch with our local West Mercia Police teams and learn more about what they are doing in your community. **It's free to sign up!**

You can choose to receive updates on crimes and the latest information about on-going incidents. You can also hear about positive police action as well as good news stories, and you can also play an active part in helping with public appeals.

To find out more and sign up, visit the [Neighbourhood Matters website](#).

Report a crime to Police 101

When you sign up to our 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. Sign up below:

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

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Old Gore Parish Councils

Last Tuesday I, with BBLP Locality Steward (LS), carried out a ward drive around following information passed by your parish council. We were ably assisted at one point by Tim Weston from UB PC – thank you Tim. Neil and I spent a whole morning but did not finish our tour. Therefore, we are going to continue and complete the tour next Wednesday. Rectification of some matters will be carried out directly by the LS and the remainder will be reported to BBLP for programming. I intend to precis what was achieved for the information of the relevant parish council.

Brampton Abbots and Foy

Last week I ‘chaired’ an on-site meeting with BBLP, including water drainage experts, Herefordshire Council, Planning Officer and Parish council chairman to discuss the ongoing flooding issue on Church Road and the potential when an approved ten house development is built. The meeting went well and many views were offered and eventually some possibilities were arrived at. The developer has now gone to consider the possibilities and those which he might support.

Upton Bishop/How Caple



I spent some time on A449 last weekend with the police carrying out speed enforcement. The locals perceive this area an issue since the speed limit has been reduced to 40 mph – with vehicles still travelling at over 40 mph in the restricted area. I have raised this matter with the Council’s road safety officer and I have requested that some broken white lining is changed to solid white lines. However, due to regulations it is not legally possible to taken double white lines up to the Ross side 40 mph terminal sign.

How Caple

As you may be aware the Post Office have given notification that they intend to close the How Caple post office, due to the resignation of the postmaster. There is to be an extraordinary parish council meeting held on Tuesday 7th February 2023 at 8pm at Brockhampton Village Hall so that other parish councils and residents may have their say about the closure. I have tried to speak with the Post Office (Laura as signed) on three occasions now by email but never returns my email or speaks with me. I shall continue to reach them before Wednesday.

As ever if you think I can be of help please do not hesitate to contact me.

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Barry Durkin

Old Gore Ward

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General Data Protection Act

The General Data Protection Act places obligations and responsibilities on any company, organisation and individual who holds and process personnel information. The new General data protection regulations (GDPR) that supersedes the Data Protection act came into force on the 25th May 2018. As a County Councillor I hold a list of emails of local people that I have built up over the years which I retain and use on my council computer and email. **In seeking to maintain legal compliance I am requesting that if anyone is unhappy with I holding your email please contact me to advise 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 in my capacity as an elected Herefordshire Councillor.

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Useful Information – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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

Flood alerts: Floodline 0345 988 1188. Sign up online at 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

BT phone line issues: www.downdetector.co.uk/status/bt-british-telecom

Gas leak: 0800 111 999 or visit www.wutilities.co.uk/services/smell-gas

Welsh Water: [0800 052 0130](tel:08000520130) (Water emergencies) or [0800 085 3968](tel:08000853968) (Sewer emergencies) or visit www.contact.dwrcymru.com/

Severn Trent water: [0800 783 4444](tel:08007834444) www.stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/check-my-area/

Report a flooded road or highway obstruction- Balfour Beatty Living Places: **01432 26180**

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

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. Please [report it here](#) or contact TalkCommunityEnquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk.

Covid19

The Latest local Covid data and information www.herefordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus-3

National Covid guidance is available on the Government website www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Talk Community

Email: 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.

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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](tel:01432261800).

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

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.

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](#)

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 flytipping form](#).

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

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Parishes Councils have their own inbox these email inboxes 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

Please do follow BBLP on Twitter for up to date information about road closures, ongoing work etc., and [@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-claims-please-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

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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