

Ward Report – for May 2021
From your local County 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.

Ledbury Household Recycling Centre – opening longer

This change in opening hours means that, from Sunday 2 May, Herefordshire residents will be able to access the Centre 9.30am – 6pm on Sundays.

To ensure safety and efficiency, residents are **still required to book slots** to visit the Household Recycling Centres. Only those who have booked a slot will be allowed entry.

This can be done online or, for those unable to book online, by contacting the Herefordshire Council customer services team on 01432 260051, who will book a slot for you.

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/1145/ledbury-household-recycling-centre-to-be-open-for-longer-on-sundays>

Herefordshire Council

Herefordshire Council has the arrival of our new Chief Executive Paul Martin from Harrow Council. As this update reveals the council is in need of some clear leadership and cultural change.

Virtual Public Meetings

This week the High Court confirmed the position that that all public meetings must no longer be done online and return to normal after 7th May but with extra costs of social distancing. This means the Annual Parish meetings in Old Gore ward will after next week face to face.

Covid Costs

Herefordshire Council has received over 20 million pounds from the government to cover the additional revenue costs regarding Covid, compensation towards lost income, providing PPE, outbreak control activities including enforcement, school transport, food and emergency assistance, accommodation costs for rough sleepers etc.

By the 9th of April 2021 the Council had paid £21,200 grants (totaling just over £100m) to businesses, including some charities and holiday lets, this number and the amount increases every day. Nearly 2,000 businesses have had help with their business rates.

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I encourage individuals and businesses struggling with Council tax or businesses rates to get in touch with the council to see if we can help.

Council Tax

The council received grants just over £1m to help households struggling to pay council tax, distributed over £5m to care homes and care providers and also to nearly 300 people required to self-isolate under test and trace rules.

When you realise this has been what has been spent in Herefordshire alone, it gives you some idea of the degree of financial cost of this pandemic to our nation and the burden around our necks for decades to come.

The Council have distributed over £5m to care homes and care providers.

Grants to nearly 300 people required to self-isolate under test and trace rules.

Herefordshire Council's rubbish and recycling service will be changing in 2023.

The future of rubbish and recycling services – what residents told the council



Future of waste
summary_residents.p

Money matters at the Council

As reported recently the Coalition run Herefordshire Council have been forced to pay over £0.2m to developers after plans for the development of the Bromyard Depot site were scrapped. The Council's inaction despite being alerted to unresolved issues over land ownership will now cost rate-payers their hard earned money.

Earlier this year almost £12m had to be set aside to cover the cost of abandoning the Hereford bypass and southern link road projects.

The Coalition leadership of Herefordshire Council repeatedly blame lack of government funding for their failings.

However, routine funding has increased by roughly 10.8% since the 2019/20 financial year, rising from £49.1 million per year to £54.4 million. This includes increases to the Rural Services Delivery Grant and funding for social care, amongst other things.

Yet Council Tax has risen again by a sizeable 4.99%. +++

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£4.5 million on the Maylord Centre while the B4224 route into Hereford remained closed for 13 months.

It was the conservatives who fought for and won government funding for a bypass. That money has been squandered by the current leadership and must now be paid back. There is no credible alternative plan in place.

The Conservative Group on Herefordshire Council will continue to hold the Coalition to account to ensure you get value for money and not bleating spurious excuses about funding.

Talk Community Website and WISH name change

As part of the continued development of Talk Community and building on the great work to date, we are delighted to announce that from today we will be launching a Talk Community website - www.talkcommunity.org.

The website will provide key information about Talk Community including videos, good news stories and launch the summer volunteering campaign – ‘give an hour this summer,’ and provide three areas that support in bringing Herefordshire together:

- How can I help myself?
- How can I help my community?
- How can my community help me?

“We are also changing the name of WISH to become the Talk Community Directory, this will still provide the same great service and functionality but with some minor amendments and name change. The new website address is - www.talkcommunitydirectory.org which will be available later today. If you need access to WISH before then please use the existing URL (www.wisherefordshire.org). WISH continues to be a highly-valued resource to our communities with its success growing and experiencing a record 59% increase in website visitors in 2020, compared to 2019”. Please take the time to visit the website and if you have any feedback please do let us know.

Family Court – judgement

Two very serious matter have arisen for the council, the performance and management of the children care services. Last week the Council has an emergency meeting to discuss the findings of the judgement of Justice Keehan, a Family Court Judge, which identifies failings by Herefordshire Council relating to a family with children in care of the authority.

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Our Children`s care services have always been under pressure and a recent high court judgement makes uncomfortable reading. Following on from previous concerns the Government has set up an Improvement Board to monitor the running of the service and report to the Secretary of State on a regular basis until such time there is confidence in the service. Herefordshire Council will be receiving extra external support as cases are reviewed, staff supported, and necessary capacity and capability of the department rebuilt. It is important to understand if the actions involved were unusual or of a more consistent pattern of poor performance.

It was proposed by the Conservative Group, at the emergency Council meeting, that in the interests of transparency and understanding, regular reports must be brought to the full council. All of us as residents will understand the issues of potholes, highways damage etc. and planning but we all need to be more aware of the duties towards the vulnerable and particularly young people that councils have.

27 April 2021
Update

Statement from the Leader of Herefordshire Council, Cllr David Hitchiner and Acting Chief Executive - in response to extraordinary council meeting.

Please see link:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/1142/statement-from-claire-ward-acting-deputy-chief-executive-and-head-of-paid-service-herefordshire-council>

Ongoing Problems with Planning.

Unless you have a project or a requirement for building you will not be affected by the performance of the planning department but we all need to understand the impact this is having on local businesses and longer term on our community. Despite the clear fall in applications in the 40% of Herefordshire covered by the Lugg catchment the planning department seems to be struggling; under staffed, missing and extending applications timescales. While applicants get frustrated by processes and additional consultant reports sprung on them, enforcement on obvious infringements is poor.

The ongoing issue of the phosphate problem seems to be getting more complicated by the recent release of advice from the planning department with no communication with Parish Councils or County Councillors. This advice has the potential to permanently restrict whole communities from building particularly those not on Welsh Water connection. However officers inform they are still considering the contents of the advice that they have published.

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<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/2039/development-in-the-river-lugg-catchment>

Local by-elections and Neighbourhood Planning Referendums

Polls open on Thursday 6 May 2021 for the Police and Crime Commissioner Election, Local by-elections and Neighbourhood Planning Referendums.

Herefordshire polling stations will open at 7am and close at 10pm.

All polling stations will be run in accordance with coronavirus (COVID-19) guidelines to ensure the safety of people wishing to visit the facilities to vote. Voters are required to wear a face covering and observe social distancing. Polling station staff will be wearing personal protective equipment (PPE). Hand sanitiser will be provided at the venues and the facilities will be cleaned regularly throughout the day. We may have to limit the number of people in a polling place at any one time. Voting may take longer than normal, so please allow extra time for your visit.

The polling stations are accessible to everyone and polling station staff are trained to help in any way they can. A magnifying glass, a tactile voting device and a copy of the ballot paper in large format are available in every polling station.

Postal votes must be received by 10pm on Thursday 6 May 2021. If you miss the post, you can hand it in to the electoral team at Hereford Town Hall or at any polling station in the electoral area before 10pm on Thursday 6 May 2021.

The verification of the votes for the Police and Crime Commissioner elections will be on the morning of Friday 7 May and the vote count will take place on Monday 10 May.

The counting of the votes for the Local Government by-election and the Neighbourhood Planning Referendums will take place on the afternoon of Friday 7 May.

For more information on the 6 May elections and referendums, including the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections and details on how to vote visit:

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/elections

Ditch and drainage responsibilities

Ditches and drains need to be maintained to reduce the risk of flooding and to maintain the condition of highways by keeping them clear of excess water. Poor drainage damages roads and creates hazards for road users and local residents. Good drainage will reduce maintenance and costs for all.

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The owner of land or property that adjoins a watercourse, such as a roadside ditch, is known as the riparian owner. Although the Highways Authority is responsible for the highway, it does not own the 'sub-soil' of the highway. The owner of the land or property adjoining the highway is normally the sole riparian owner.

Who is responsible for ditch and drainage maintenance? The illustration shows ownership responsibilities.

Covid

Locally in Herefordshire and Worcestershire 437,000 people have received their first vaccine and 141,000 have received two.

As of 11 April 103,518 Herefordshire residents had received their first dose: 66% of eligible residents (aged 18+).

A reminder that the over 50 year olds who have been contacted by their surgery – you will be contacted again with your second appointment. Under 50s must book online with the NHS and they will be given their two appointment dates and vaccinated, as I was at Ross-on-Wye.

All adults will have received their first vaccine by 31st July and it looks as though more work is being done on maturing a further vaccine for us all in the autumn. Free rapid testing can be booked locally. More information can be found

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus-3/covid-19-testing>

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Hereford Hospital Admissions



Published data shows that by 11 April there was only one COVID-19 patient in Wye Valley Trust hospitals. For five days over the Easter weekend (3

to 7 April) there were none –for the first time since 20 September

Over the course of the pandemic a total of 754 patients have been admitted, almost a third of whom were admitted during January. Only 16 were admitted during March, and non-one has been on mechanical ventilation since mid-March.

Local Skills and Employment Opportunities

The government's new UK Community Renewal Fund will allocate up to £3m for innovative projects in Herefordshire over the next year. Herefordshire has been chosen as one of 100 places across the UK to receive funding through the government's £220m UK Community Renewal Fund, for investment in skills development, communities, businesses and improve local employment opportunities. Herefordshire Council (as the designated lead authority) is inviting voluntary and community sector organisations, education providers and business groups to submit proposals for innovative pilot projects that address local challenges, develop skills and support people into work. Please see link below.

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/1135/new-fund-for-investment-in-local-skills-and-employment-opportunities>

County Lines

County lines drug dealers are exploiting vulnerable children, young people and adults across the country. They are often involved in serious violence and can put young and vulnerable people in dangerous situations.

If you want to report concerns about County Lines in your neighbourhood, please contact The Safer Neighbourhood Team in your area:

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Supervision

Insp James Ashton **07773045224**
Sgt Nick Green **07791665731**
Sgt Darren Ball **07773050433**
T/Sgt Jim Phillips **07976938632**

Kington

PC Dean Wall **07773053846**
PCSO Felix Rawlinson **07971051480**
PCSO Emma Dunne **07971051474**

Bromyard

PC Sarah Smith **07773047243**
PCSO Sue Berrett **07773045837**
PCSO Di Smith **07967302564**

Leominster

PC Max Beswick **07773051858**
PCSO Adam Michniok **07773048272**
PCSO Steph Harper **07773043483**
PCSO Gareth Maddox **07976938951**

Ledbury

PC Sarah Ransome-Williams
07773048118
PCSO Nick Ashby **07817941145**

Hereford City

PC Keith Ramone **07773048885**
PC Marcus Garland **07773034381**
PCSO Charlotte House **07773052579**
PCSO Raj Matthews **07773046846**

Hereford City South

PC Jim Phillips **07976938632**
PC Stefan Hawes **07773054234**
PCSO Lewis Thomas **07773051508**
PCSO Christina Howard **07773052529**
PCSO Hayley Warne **07773052560**
PCSO Carol Marsh **07890524667**

Hereford City North

PC Kirsty O'Brien **07773052571**
PCSO Elena Daffurn **07773033980**
PCSO Leeanne Walker **07773051607**
PCSO (Vacancy)

Hereford Rural North

PC Josh Kitchen **07773053436**
PCSO Adam Westlake **07773052580**
PCSO Georgie Boswell **07971395167**

Golden Valley

PC Jeff Rouse **07870150972**
PCSO Fiona Witcher **07773054582**
PCSO Peter Knight **07773053919**

Ross-on-Wye

PC Shirley Hawkins **07773053400**
PCSO Kirsten Bowkett **07773034152**
PCSO Claire Denton **07866215011**
PCSO Simon Hall **07967302401**
PCSO David Alexander **07773049929**

Fly tipping added to report it app

The report it app has a new feature to include fly tipping. This means you can report illegal



fly tipping quickly and easily. The app is available directly from the council website so there is no need to visit a third party app store, and it always links to the most up to date version so no need to update it or have it taking up valuable space on your device, just open the link and add it to your device's home screen. The app allows you to pin point your current location (using the location finder as at bottom right corner) or type in an address, and then add in a photo if you want and then send. The app has been design to make it quick and easy to report issues affecting our community and keep a record of where there are

repeated incidents.

Enhanced maps on the website

The Herefordshire Council website includes a feature for “my neighbourhood” (green button on the top right corner of the front page) which allow you to search for services based on postcode. This currently covers council offices, children centres, community halls, cemeteries, libraries, schools and recycle / waste centres, nearest primary and secondary schools, ward information and elected councillor. This feature is due to be enhanced over the next few months to give a fuller picture of what is available in a local areas along with

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nearest facilities. This will not just include data from Herefordshire Council but information from the health and voluntary sectors. www.herefordshire.gov.uk

Apply for a Postal Vote - Local by-elections

Just to remind you, in the future there will be the normal council elections in Herefordshire in early **May 2023** and if you can't get to your polling station for whatever reason, or do not want to vote in person at a polling station, you can apply for a postal vote but you must be registered under Individual Electoral Registration first. You may register for a postal vote for this upcoming election please select:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote>

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.

[PLEASE CONTINUE SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL BUSINESS](#)

Many of our local business are supporting our community with supplying delivery of groceries, take away food and other items.

They are too many to list here in case I miss someone but they will be on your local websites.

Please support them. If this crisis teaches us anything it is the importance of local community and a local economy.

Information from Parishes

How Caple: The works proposed at How Caple crossroads draws closer with a meeting arranged for Wednesday 5th May, when the contract proposal will be discussed. I am keen that we keep the B4224 fully available, as possible to prevent the inconvenience and potential damage to our local environment. Nothing decided yet and the PC chairman and clerk will attend this meeting with the Fownhope councillor and me to view their proposals.

Upton Bishop: The proposal to install traffic lights at Old Gore crossroads has been selected for financing and proposals will soon be forthcoming to illustrate what is proposed. These tentative plans are currently be reviewed by the land owner and when we have a consensus I will be providing the parish council with an overview.

Woolhope: The roads around Woolhope have been inspected by BBLP to determine how and when to repair the damaged infrastructure. BBLP are currently carrying out remedial work.

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

Barry

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bdurkin@herefordshire.gov.uk

Useful Information

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

Defect Reporting

As always please continue to make use and encourage the use of established reporting methods for any highways defect;

- Telephone our customer services on [01432 261 800](tel:01432261800).
- Online using the telephone app – for potholes, dog poo and Public Rights of Way (PROW)

Please note that Herefordshire Council strongly encourages Balfour Beatty to promote all service requests and queries should be logged via the HC website at

<https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole> or
<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes>

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.

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

For any PROW (Public Rights of Way) maps or problems, you can report these via the following link on the Herefordshire Council's website:

<https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-public-right-of-way-problem>

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To report defects (potholes, fly tipping, blocked gullies, etc.) online:

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/190/report_problems_on_the_road

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 on 01432 261800, 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.

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](#).

If you wish to email into the business, the best email address for Parishes have their own inbox herefordshireparishes@bblivingplaces.com and both of 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

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

Toolkits:

Community commissioning

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/18820/community_commissioning_model_toolkit.pdf

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Litter picking

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

SIDs

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., [@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

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

General Data Protection Regulations Statement

The General Data Protection Act places obligations and responsibilities on any company, organisation and individual who hold and process personnel information, and it comes into force on the 25th May 2018; superseding the Data Protection Act 1998. 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. I can give you all the reassurance that I do not and will not share those email addresses with any third party.

In seeking legal compliance as a data controller I am requesting that if anyone is unhappy with my holding their email contact that you please advise me so that I am able to remove you from the list. Otherwise I will retain your email contact and continue to send you monthly updates, emails as required and occasional key information.