

Ward Report – for November 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.

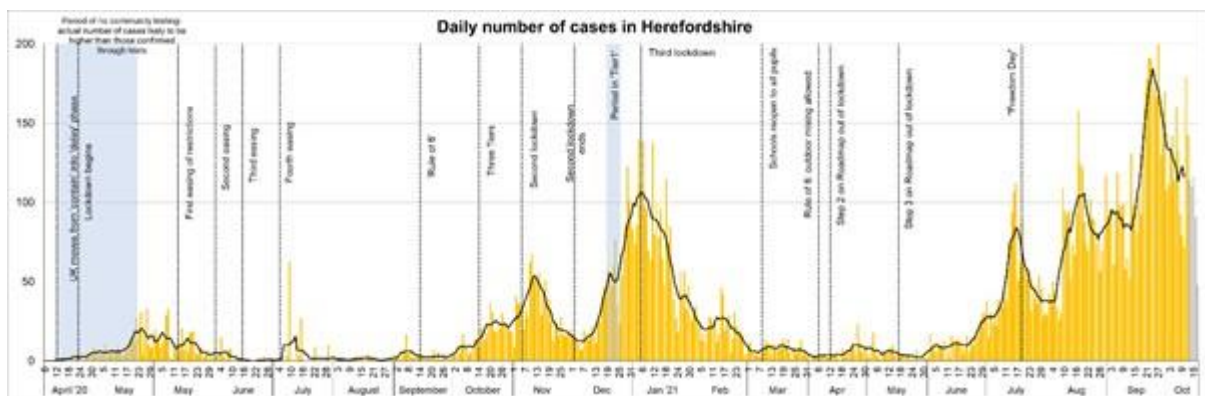
Dear Parish Councillors and Residents, welcome to this edition of my ward report I hope you find it interesting and there is a 'useful information' section at the end.



Local Covid Update

In Herefordshire, 88% of all eligible adults have received their first dose vaccine, 84% have had their second. In the UK, 86.2% have had their first dose and 79% their second.

The roll out of the booster vaccination to all over 50s and vulnerable adults is underway and as you will be contacted by your surgery so wait to hear from them – you may be vaccinated at your surgery or one of the other Herefordshire centers. -- Please do not ring your surgery.



Lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases in Herefordshire

Lab-confirmed cases are the official count of people who live in Herefordshire and have tested positive for COVID-19. In the first few months of the pandemic, numbers of confirmed cases were dependent on testing policy so are not comparable with later waves.

- There were **813 new cases confirmed in the 7 days to 13 October**– a **13% decrease on the seven days to 6 October (936)**. (Note that reporting lags mean daily numbers can change, and the grey bars for the last 5 days may increase)
- The line on the chart shows the average daily number of new cases. This figure has fallen sharply since the peak in late September and as of 11 October the figure was 113, a figure almost a third lower than the September peak.

Update for 20th October

- The Government has published the COVID-19 Response available <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-autumn-and-winter-plan-2021>

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- It outlines how “[vaccination] boosters, testing and refreshed public health advice will help keep the virus under control in the coming months”. It also describes a range of ‘Plan B’ measures which could be (re)introduced to protect the NHS if necessary, e.g. mandatory face coverings.
- The number of new cases in Herefordshire has fallen in the last week with 813 recorded in the last week compared to 936 the previous week, although rates remain relatively high across the county with widespread community transmission evident. The Herefordshire seven day case rate has fallen sharply while national and regional rates have increased so that the latest local figure (420 per 100,000) is now close to both the national and regional rates after having been appreciably higher than both figures only two weeks ago.
- While confirmed cases in secondary school age children are falling they continue to drive the overall rate: one third of new cases in the last week were aged 11 to 17. The rate amongst over 80s have fallen in the last week.
- Within recent weeks there has been an increase in the number of cases linked to adult social care settings. A similar pattern is seen across the country. This is not unexpected, as case rates are high, with widespread community transmission.
- The number of hospital admissions remain high with 38 admitted in the first ten days of October – consequently, the pressure on Wye Valley Trust is high. Overall total deaths remain close to average for the time of year, although Covid-related deaths continue to rise with four registered in the last two weeks.
- There has been a recent gradual decline in the number of LFD tests. People should be reminded of the importance of LFD testing in giving early identification of cases, a fact especially when younger people will be spending time with more vulnerable family members over half-term
- The Government’s Plan A relies on effective vaccination coverage, and all eligible individuals are encouraged to take up both doses of their vaccine. The second dose more than doubles the resistance against developing symptoms, and considerably reduces the risk of death. Overall vaccination rates are in line with regional and national averages: 88% of all Herefordshire residents who are registered with an English GP (aged 18+) have received a first dose, and 84% a second dose. However there are some exceptions:
 - Booster vaccinations are underway across the county with those eligible being invited to book an appointment
 - Vaccination uptake amongst under 50s remains below 85%, particularly of the second dose amongst people aged 40 to 49
 - Uptake is noticeably lower in some of the more deprived areas of the county

For more detailed information for Herefordshire

<https://understanding.herefordshire.gov.uk/health/covid-19-summary/>

And National guidance <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

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Broadband – review in Gigaclear countywide contract

As you may know Gigaclear are behind the agreed build schedule and the Council are increasingly concerned regarding their progress and ability to reach premises under their current obligation. Gigaclear have also informed that they need to review their delivery across the communities in parts of their plan.

Listed below are the number of premises in Old Gore Ward that are affected by Gigaclear's review

- Premises affected by the review: 229
- Already has superfast broadband: 1129

Future planned coverage of any other provider (that the council know of). So please make sure you are registered.

- Planned superfast broadband including those that already have coverage: 1332

As a result, the Council are currently exploring different options and we are due to have a cabinet member decision in early November.

Rural Road Safety – Police message

West Mercia Police and partner agencies are reminding all road users to take extra care on rural roads in Herefordshire this autumn and are asking motorists to be patient around agricultural vehicles during this important season as harvest continues. Please see the link for the latest press release from West Mercia Police

<https://www.westmercia.police.uk/news/west-mercia/news/2021/october/take-extra-care-on-rural-roads-in-herefordshire/>

Energy Advocacy Service: Supporting residents with their home energy

Did you know...Keep Herefordshire Warm offer an Energy Advocacy Service. The service is available for anyone living in Herefordshire, who is struggling to pay their energy bills and keep their home warm or navigate the complex world of home energy.

The service's Energy Advocate, Amy, can offer friendly and professional advice to help with understanding and managing bills, fuel debt, meter issues, liaising with energy companies, keeping warm on a budget, switching tariffs and suppliers. She can also provide energy efficiency advice, money saving tips and can signposting to heating and insulation grants.

The support is available over the phone, online or through home visits. To find out more and make a referral, please visit the <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/family-support/winter-health-warmth-safety> or contact Amy at advocate@severnwyve.org.uk.

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Council leaders met to discuss shared interests

Leaders, Cabinet members and Chief Executives of Herefordshire Council and Powys County Council met last week of October. Topics of discussion were a range of issues around economic development, such as the Borders Growth Deal, the Levelling up Fund, phosphate development and opportunities for sharing learning and good practice and working together across the two Councils. A follow-up meeting is planned for December to continue the discussion.

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/1247/council-leaders-meet-to-discuss-shared-interests>

The Chancellor announced in his budget to the nation that there were several announcements that affect council services.

- All schools and colleges will receive extra funding to help pupils catch up on lost learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Chancellor also announced an extra £200 million for the Supporting Families Programme, which equates to around a 40% real-terms uplift in funding for the programme by 2024-25.
- Of interest to small and medium sized businesses, he also announced that the Recovery Loan Scheme would be extended until 30 June 2022. This scheme supports access to finance for UK businesses as they recover from the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cabinet approves new 80-bed care home

New care home facility will support the needs of some of the most vulnerable people in the county. Herefordshire Council will be developing a new 80-bed care home in the county following a Cabinet decision on Thursday 28 October.

Demographic changes and the development of the local care home market is set to add to the pressure on existing capacity because of increasing numbers of older and disabled people with complex needs.

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/1245/cabinet-approves-new-80-bed-care-home>

Cabinet backs Children Services Improvement Plan

The Children and Families Strategic Improvement Plan sets out how the council will deliver high-quality services for the county's children and young people and place them at the heart of all decision-making processes.

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<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/1244/herefordshire-s-children-s-services-improvement-plan-endorsed-by-cabinet>

Report concerns about a child - Worried about a child?

You may be concerned about a child or young person. You may or may not know them, or even their name. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Abuse can take many different forms, such as neglect, sexual abuse, physical abuse and even emotional abuse.

Don't assume that someone else will take responsibility and make that phone call. You could help to save a child's life. **If you are worried, report it.**

If you think that a child has been harmed or is being neglected, contact the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) or the Police on the contact numbers listed below:

The MASH - If you need to speak to the team - (01432) 260800

Emergency Duty Team - (01905) 768020 (out of hours number for when MASH are unavailable) Click the link to download: [Multi Agency Referral Form](#) (MARF)

Contacting the Police when you think a child is in immediate danger: 999 (in an emergency)

Contacting the police to discuss a child protection or safeguarding concern when a child is not in immediate danger: 101

(You can also email the police to inform them of concerns and start a conversation with them at contactus@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)

ChildLine - **0800 1111**

NSPCC - **0808 800 5000**

Foster Carer new film

Herefordshire Council's Fostering Team have collaborated with councils and trusts from all over England to commission a new short film aimed at helping to find more foster carers who can provide homes for the children and young people who need them.

The unique film project has been developed by the West Midlands Regional Fostering Recruitment Forum, and extended to include some 34 local authorities and trusts from around the country.

The short film, called 'Out There', highlights the ways fostering can make a difference to the lives of everyone involved, from the children and young people who live with foster carers,

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to those who come forward to care for them. The film premiered on 12 October to an online audience of councillors, CEOs, managers, social workers, foster carers and those involved in the recruitment of foster carers.

Council submits plan to Government for investment in bus services

Improving bus services across the county for residents and visitors is central to plans soon to be submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT). Read the review:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/1241/council-submits-plan-to-government-for-investment-in-bus-services>

Talk Community website

Why not register for the Talk Community Directory. You'll be joining the Council's growing family of over 950 local and national organisations, groups and services. To complete your registration, simply click on the link below.

Register your organisation, service or group <https://www.talkcommunitydirectory.org/>

Spray scam hits Herefordshire residents

Herefordshire Council's Trading Standards service is warning elderly residents not to fall for spray foam loft insulation scams currently active in the county. Please advise all your contacts and advertise widely as we do not want anyone being conned with yet other scam.

Apply for a Postal Vote - Local by-elections

After the recent elections in Herefordshire I would take this opportunity to advise that you may apply for a postal vote, at any time, for the local election in **May 2023**. **So** if you can't get to your polling station for whatever reason, or you 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 upcoming election please review:

<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](#)

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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 have finished and the result looks really good. The outstanding concern about which a query has been raised regards whether there is the requirement for Armco barrier to be installed is still outstanding but is being chased up and I await an answer.

Upton Bishop: The proposal to install traffic lights at Old Gore crossroads started on 27th October 2021 and the works will continue until completion until mid to end January 2022 and the junction fully signalised.

Flooding and emergency action group

With the support of Upton Bishop Parish Council and residents there is a flood and emergency group forming in the parish who can respond swiftly to help alert and support households to prepare for a flooding event and deal where they can be incidents within the parish. There is much more to do enabling the emergency action plan and methods to be adopted to assist with incidents. Should any further parish councils, or residents wish to consider setting up a similar group please contact me.

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

Barry

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Old Gore Ward

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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>

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

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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

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:

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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](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.