



March 2026 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

Dear Residents

As I am sure we can all attest it's been one of the wettest periods any of us can remember, the roads have really suffered with potholes and break ups all over the network. I am informed that since beginning of January till end of February over 3,000 potholes have been filled with Bafour having six teams each filling over 150 potholes per day. It is frustrating the amount of time its taking and numbers filled. However, when one considers how wet it has been. Virtually every day since January started, with the resultrant outcome of saturated roads, water entering the cracks in the road and the cold weather causing the water to freeze – hence more potholes. Now that spring is approaching and weather getting less wet things will improve. Please keep reporting as highlighted in my highways section below.

The Government recently issued a revaluation of business rates to all our local businesses and some of our small businesses have seen significant increases of 50% and more. Together with rises in National Insurance, National Minium Wage and electricity etc this revaluation puts our valued community businesses under enormous pressure. If there are any other similar businesses impacted in the ward please contact me so we can build up our evidence base.



The Leominster Business Hub was formally launched on 2nd February at an event attended by the Leader of Herefordshire Council, Councillor Jonathan Lester, (second on left) and representatives from the local business community.

The hub offers local businesses the opportunity to speak directly with a Growth Hub Officer, access guidance on grants and finance, and use practical facilities including meeting rooms, co-working space, hot-desking and high-speed Wi-Fi, at either low or no cost.

The Business Hub is part of Herefordshire Council's wider approach to supporting local economic growth and helps connect local businesses directly to the wider Herefordshire Growth Hub network, providing access to specialist guidance and support. Next month I have invited the recently appointed Director of Economy and environment to visit my ward and meet local medium sized businesses.

In this month update I revisit the budget setting for 2026/27 and the Council Tax rate, the consultation on the Herefordshire Nature Recovery Strategy, Highways, and also local events and contact list.

Should you need to contact me, please feel free.

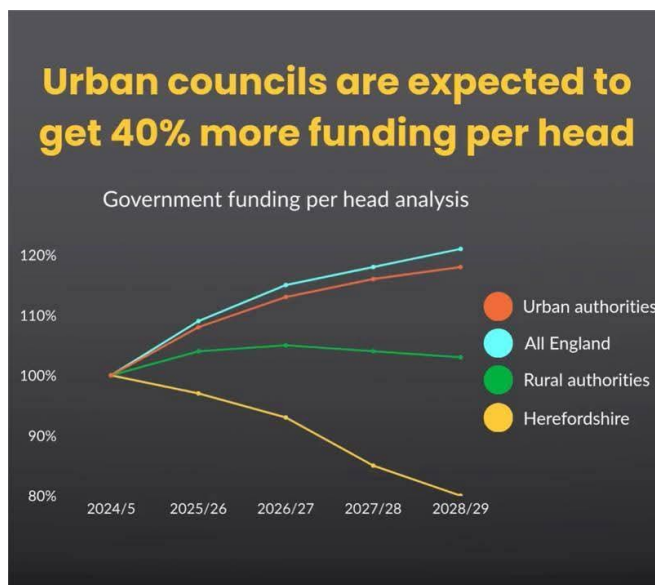
Kind regards

Barry

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A Challenging Budget setting for Herefordshire Council



Herefordshire Council voted through the 2026/27 revenue budget at its meeting on the 13th February.

There were no opposition amendments to the proposed budget with all councillors recognising it was the best that could be delivered given the Government's reduction of financial support to Herefordshire.

The revenue budget sets out a responsible plan to close a £30 million funding gap next year, due to the outcome of the

Government's "Fair Funding Review 2" not meeting the costs of the growing and more complex needs of our communities, and rural setting. This new formula equates to Herefordshire residents getting 32% less funding per head from Whitehall than those in urban areas. To balance the budget, the council identified £20 million in savings and approved a 4.99% council tax increase to meet the costs of delivering services to residents; this percentage being assumed by the government as part of its three year settlement.

Financial support for council tax bills will be provided to 6,500 households in the county. It leaves a challenging budget to find 20 million pounds of savings in year

I make no apologies for including again the graph above, with the red line, which shows the poor settlement Herefordshire has received for the next three years.

Residents will be aware both our neighbouring authorities Worcestershire and Shropshire are in worse financial positions. Worcestershire voted through a 9% council tax rise and is borrowing 100 million pounds from the government at 6% interest- taken out of their revenue account.

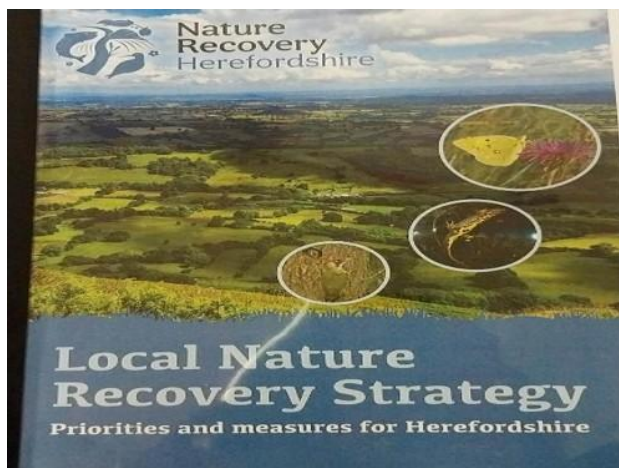
Our budget next year reflects what residents told the council during the Budget and Council Tax 2026/27 consultation, with highways being their top priority. In response, the capital programme includes one of the council's largest ever investments in the roads network, including a £5 million resurfacing program and hopefully more than £24 million in Department for Transport maintenance grants to cut reactive repairs, reduce backlogs and improve road conditions countywide.

The meeting also agreed the capital (long-term spending) programme which invests in the county's assets and infrastructure – from roads resurfacing, highways maintenance and housing.

Emergency and temporary accommodation received the largest addition to the capital programme in 26/27, meaning, in the future, less reliance on private landlords and reducing the costs to the revenue budget. There will also be investment in the restoration of the county's historic buildings and continued support for the Hereford Bypass.

Continued investment in natural environment protection, delivering two more wetlands schemes to support biodiversity recovery and nutrient neutrality. Expanded drainage, attenuation and flood alleviation works, Public Rights of Way and bridge repairs and Ash Dieback management.

Consultation on Herefordshire Nature Recovery Strategy



Local residents, environmental groups, landowners, farmers and charities have come together with Herefordshire Council to launch a new collaborative approach to protecting and restoring Herefordshire's natural environment. Together they have shaped the county's first ever [Local Nature Recovery Strategy \(LNRS\)](#), a major new plan with 15 habitat priorities designed to protect, enhance and reconnect the landscapes, habitats and species that make Herefordshire special. Backed by extensive mapping, expert scientific input and collaboration with landowners, charities, national agencies

and community organisations over the past two years, the LNRS sets out almost 100 potential opportunities to boost biodiversity and restore natural assets across Herefordshire's 200,000 hectares.

Council specialists and partners are already working with many landowners on local projects. A public consultation has now been launched to get wider feedback and input into the plan – including potential for even more opportunities to enhance the

environment for the future. An interactive online map allows people to zoom in on 42 potential habitat measures and 12 supporting actions, plus 43 potential species measures. The LNRS is not a list of mandatory schemes. Instead it outlines a menu of voluntary ideas and suggestions, alongside existing nature reserves, wildlife sites and unique habitats, that residents, farmers and all types of landowners can choose to pursue with support from the Council and partners. Council staff are already working with landowners, environmental charities and others in the county wide effort to create healthier habitats, cleaner watercourses, richer wildlife and more resilient ecosystems. Consultation closes on 22nd March :

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/2026/february/local-nature-recovery-strategy-consultation/>

Health, skills, jobs and social connection

A new free-to-use tablet computer scheme in six Herefordshire libraries is helping tackle digital inclusion, build IT skills, boost jobs and employment opportunities, and tackle social isolation.

[Health, skills, jobs and social connection: library tablet scheme opens new digital doors for Herefordshire residents - Herefordshire Council](#)

Grassroots investment in Herefordshire

Community-based projects across Herefordshire have benefited from £50,000 of Council investment to continue the great work they do.

[Herefordshire Council invests £50,000 in grassroots community projects across the county - Herefordshire Council](#)

Merton Meadow Project Begins

Work has begun on an innovative project that marks a major step in transforming city centre land at Merton Meadow, creating the foundations for future homes for people of all ages, publicly accessible wetlands, and the wider regeneration of Hereford.

[Merton Meadow flood project paves the way for new homes and regeneration - Herefordshire Council](#)

New Invest in Herefordshire

Herefordshire Council and partners have launched a new Invest in Herefordshire service and website to attract business investment, support growth and create better-paid jobs in the county.

[New Invest in Herefordshire service launched to attract business investment and jobs - Herefordshire Council](#)

Herefordshire Trading Standards and Police take action against illegal tobacco

Herefordshire Council's Trading Standards team, working with West Mercia Police, carried out enforcement action today (Friday) targeting the sale of illegal cigarettes and other illicit tobacco products at shops across the county.

[Herefordshire Trading Standards and Police take action against illegal tobacco](#)

Police



Local neighbourhood Team for Ross

[Ross on Wye Safer Neighbourhood Team - Neighbourhood Matters](#)

Police Information - Neighbourhood

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

Local Emergency Numbers

Reporting Highway Issues –

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](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

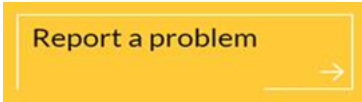
https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/190/report_problems_on_the_road

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.

For all Highway related defects report via:

24hr Phone – 01432 261 800

Website - Click Below



Report a problem →

Dedicated Inboxes

Response within 10 working days

Members and Parish Inboxes:

for additional service information

Communities Inbox:

Social Value Support

Gullies

A basic map of known gullies for which Herefordshire Council at:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/flooding-2/flood-management/3#gulliesmap>.

Gullies are individually marked on the map with latitudes and longitudes being displayed along with a site code, which is used to identify the length of road where the asset is located.

Reporting gullies that need attention:

Report issues with the highway drainage network through the Council's online reporting system at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/report-problems-road>.

Issues reported are investigated by the relevant Locality Steward, who assesses the report against the Highway Maintenance Plan in order to determine the level of intervention required. Where necessary a job for a reactive cleanse is then raised and passed to a crew to attend.

Planned Roadworks

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](https://twitter.com/HfdsStreets) and if you need help to set that up, please let me know.

If you wish to make a claim because of damage to your vehicle.

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/206/highway_claimsplease use.

Report fly's 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](#).

Bins not collected

For info and for helping with constituent enquiries in the future, if any resident goes online and tries to log a missed bin collection the systems are set up to tell you whether there is a problem in your area. Or indeed, if the road hasn't yet been signed off by the collection crew.

This would give an immediate response to the enquiry, this is the correct and quickest route for anyone to find out about their collection or report it as a problem.

[Report a problem with household bins - Herefordshire Council](#)

Report Footpaths issues –

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](#).

- PROW - PROW@herefordshire.gov.uk
- PROW No – [01432 383 550](tel:01432383550)

Report Fly tipping.

It will be dealt with in a much quicker time frame by either calling the Contact Centre on 01432 261800 or by logging the fly tipping via the council website on the links below as your https://link.edgепilot.com/s/f452e836/Hy5YWk_SgEGkleekL2ROFQ?u=https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200226/report_a_problem/98/fly_tipping

Flooding: emergency contact details – please share with your networks

Report a flooded road or highway obstruction- Balfour Beatty Living Places: [01432 2618000](tel:014322618000)
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.

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

Flood alerts: Flood line 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.

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

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/

Household incidents contact details – please share with your networks.

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.wwutilities.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/

The Citizens Advice Bureau Online at advice@citizensadviceherefordshire.org.uk for initial contact by email. Please also give a contact phone number in case we need to contact you for more information.

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

Ukraine relief - Local teams continues to organise supplies - details can be found on

<https://www.talkcommunitydirectory.org/ukraine>

<https://www.facebook.com/drivingsuppliestoukraine/>

Community needs contact details – please share with your networks.

Talk Community

Email: Talkcommunitycovidresponse@herefordshire.gov.uk

Telephone: [01432 260027](tel:01432 260027)

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_o
ctober_2016.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5210/highway_maintenance_plan_october_2016.pdf)

Litter picking

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/14134/community_litter_pick_toolki
t.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/14134/community_litter_pick_toolkit.pdf)

Did you know...?

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](tel: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)

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.

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)

Traffic Regulation Orders

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2891/application_toolkit_for_traffic_regulation_orders.pdf

Speed Indicator Devices - SIDs

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1859/speed_indicator_device_toolkit.pdf