

November 2026 Ward Report – Old Gore Ward

Parishes of: Brampton Abbotts 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

While we have seen some desperately needed rain our brooks and watercourses are still dry and I am dealing with householders with no water for years. As we are told to stock up for national emergencies, in our rural areas we probably have a better understanding of resilience than our urban counterparts.

In this ward report I cover the recent global security threat incident. Thankfully, the council's main website remained available throughout. It all reflects on the changing challenges we face today.

The council finances and the council tax reduction scheme proposal which is out for consultation.

The decision by BT digital switchover and to close down their analogue system in January 2027.

The application of National Planning Policy Framework {NPPF} Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 for planning applications. This requirement on councils came into force on 31st October 2026 and has an effect on all applications and their decision making and deciding which planning applications are determined by planning officers, and which can be considered by the Planning Applications Committee.

Finally, but not contained within a progress report on the Hereford Shire Hall and the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery projects.

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

Stay Safe

Kind regards

Barry

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Council Finances

Herefordshire Council, has been hit particularly hard by Government funding reductions, is preparing for next years budget. One of the saving proposals is reduce the Council Tax reduction scheme which currently offers residents on lower incomes 100% relief on their Council Tax Bill. The scheme helps low-income resident to lower or completely pay off their council tax bills

The proposal is reducing the offer to 80% for 2027/28, and those residents will pay 20% of their council tax bill, as was in place pre covid. The current cost of the 100% reduction is £16.4M per year and thus reducing this to 80% for working residents, OAPs will not be affected, will save the council approx. £3M. These are some of the hard choices that need to be made to get a balanced budget for next April.

Please have your say on this proposal:

Council Tax Reduction - Herefordshire Council

Phosphate and associated regulations in Herefordshire

Despite 40% of the County being impacted by the phosphate regulations Herefordshire continues to deliver new homes, with 677 net additional homes completed last year. But the Government expects us, as a requirement, to over double that number. Herefordshire Council faces a mandatory housing target of 27,260 new homes over a 20-year period, following the UK government's revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Nutrient management - guidance for developers - Herefordshire Council

Planning applications changes

This new national legislation, The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** in England, revised in August/September 2026—restructures how planning decisions are made by splitting policies into two distinct families:

Under the **National Scheme of Delegation**, which took effect on **31 October 2026**, the criteria for bringing a planning application to a planning committee in England have been completely overhauled. Individual local authorities can no longer determine their own "trigger points" (such as a specific number of public objections or ward member call-ins) to automatically force an application into committee.

What are the changes?

The National Scheme of Delegation divides planning applications into different schedules, setting out how they must be handled.

Schedule 1 Functions: Lists the types of planning applications that must always be delegated to planning officers for a decision.
Schedule 2 Functions: Applications will normally be delegated to officers but may be referred to the Planning Applications Committee in exceptional circumstances, provided they meet specific statutory criteria and pass the required Gateway Test.

The changes mean that some existing local arrangements will no longer be possible. This includes the ability of ward councillors to request that individual applications be considered by committee, as well as existing arrangements that allow applications to be referred to committee when a specified number of objections has been received.

It is the Government tightening the planning process, with two definite levels of planning decision criteria – which came into force on 31st with planning committees being reduced in size and thus less representation of local concerns. October 2026.

National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK

New national rules change how planning decisions are made locally | Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

Digital switchover

Landline telephone services in the UK are switching to a fully digital network. This means phone calls will be carried out over the internet (instead of analogue landlines). This is what's known as the digital switchover.

The switchover is happening because analogue telephone lines are becoming harder and more expensive to maintain, and the UK needs a modern digital system that can handle communications via mobile phones, laptops, tablets and other electronic devices.

The digital switchover is planned to be completed by January 2027.

How will it affect me; what do I need to do?

For most consumers and businesses, this change will be straightforward.

If you already have an internet connection, the change may be as simple as plugging your phone into your broadband router, rather than the socket on the wall.

If you need to upgrade your phone system, your provider may need to arrange for a telephone engineer to come to your home to install a new system.

If you have other devices connected to your phone line, such as an alarm and healthcare system (including Technology Enabled Care (TEC)), your alarm or healthcare system provider might need to upgrade your alarm device to make sure it's compatible. If you're unsure about how a device in your home or business might be affected, contact the equipment supplier or device manufacturer to find out whether it will still work on a digital phone line.

Your telecoms provider (e.g. Virgin Media, O2 or BT) will contact you ahead of the switchover to let you know what you need to do to make sure your service isn't affected. You do not need to take any action until your provider contacts you direct

Everyone was updated on fast Broadband. We are at 98% of the county which has 30MBs or faster and 75% of the county has fibre to the home so can go up to 1GBs. It is the last 2% that we are now focussing on. Officers will be in touch with ward members for them to pass on details of residents who are part of this 2%. They will then be able to offer them, fixed wireless access (Air band type connection), 4G or 5G home broadband and finally low earth orbit satellite (Starlink). The officers will advise residents and put them in touch with the service providers, but the contract will be between the resident and the provider. However, if there is any installation cost then we can pay for that just not the ongoing costs.

We are *also* investigating how to improve mobile phone connectivity across the county and will be looking for villages with poor mobile phone connectivity to be used as a pilot for the installation of a small phone node which requires power and a broadband connection. We are also looking at adopting multi-SIMs which support data only on any network.

Economic Potential – Rural Communities

New research shows how investment in infrastructure, skills and better-paid jobs could unlock economic growth in rural counties. Herefordshire Council has welcomed a national report highlighting the economic potential of rural areas and the importance of continued investment in infrastructure, businesses and skills to support future growth.

Herefordshire Council welcomes national report on rural economic growth and

The report, published by the County Councils Network (CCN) and Grant Thornton UK, f

Further investment into Herefordshire

The opening of a new Herefordshire headquarters for international manufacturing business CEJN Group is being welcomed as another positive example of business growth and investment in the county.

Swedish-owned CEJN Group, a global specialist in high-performance connection technology, has officially opened its new UK headquarters at Moreton Business Park, reinforcing its long-term commitment to Herefordshire.

Global manufacturer invests in new Herefordshire headquarters

Region's Investment

Herefordshire Council has showcased the county's and region's investment opportunities to ministers, MPs, senior government officials and investors at a Westminster reception, hosted by the Marches Forward Partnership.

The Leader of Herefordshire Council joined counterparts from Shropshire, Powys and Monmouthshire at the House of Commons event (Monday 19 October), which brought together more than 100 representatives from government, business, infrastructure and the farming sector.

Herefordshire puts investment opportunities in the spotlight at Westminster

Herefordshire tourism ballot

Tourism Businesses across Herefordshire have voted decisively in favour of a further five-year Term for Visit Herefordshire, securing continued investment in the County's visitor economy from 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2032.

Voting Outcome: The ballot, independently administered by Civica Election Services, passed with 74.73% of voting businesses in favour, alongside 87.59% of the vote by aggregate rateable value.

Visit Herefordshire's new Business Plan is focused on four ambitious pillars:

1. Attracting Visitors and New Audiences,
2. Working Together for Business Growth,
3. Authentic Herefordshire as an Economic Engine for Tourism, and
4. Investment in Tourism.

These priorities will help to continue to deliver an improving visitor economy

Herefordshire County Business Improvement District Ballot 2026

Progress - Shire Hall and HMAG

Progress continues on Shire Hall and Hereford, Museum and Art Gallery (HMAG) as revised visions take shape.
Over recent months, we have been working with architects, heritage specialists and partners to develop revised proposals for the Shire Hall and Hereford Museum & Art Gallery (HMAG) projects.
As these designs have evolved, a clear theme has emerged: to rediscover the character and beauty that has been hidden over time.
Both buildings have undergone countless alterations over many decades. False walls, suspended ceilings, partitions, service installations and other adaptations may have

served practical purposes at the time, but they have also concealed many of the architectural features, proportions and spaces that originally made these buildings so special. Our revised designs seek to strip away many of those additions and uncover the beauty, craftsmanship and character that has gradually been hidden from view.

Progress continues on Shire Hall and HMAG as revised visions take shape - Herefordshire Council

Global security threat

The recent global security incident affecting PHP, (referring: Hypertext Preprocessor), also affected Herefordshire Council. PHP is a server-side web development programming language, widely used technology that supports websites and online services around the world. I am just as baffled by this threat and the language use but perhaps some of you know what is being said.

As a precautionary measure, a number of our online forms and customer service systems were temporarily taken offline while security updates were applied and additional checks completed. The council's main website remained available throughout. It all reflects on the changing challenges we all face today.

PHP: What is it and why did it spark a global cyber security scramble? - BBC News

New special school at the Ryefield Centre in Ross-on-Wye

We have published the outcome of the consultation on the proposed new special school at the Ryefield Centre in Ross-on-Wye.

The proposal is for a 40-place school for children aged four to 11 with moderate and additional learning difficulties and other complex special educational needs. The feedback received will now help inform the next stage of the process as we work to increase specialist provision within Herefordshire and enable more children to be educated closer to their families and communities.

Read the Ryefield Centre consultation update and

Consultation outcome published for proposed Ryefield Centre special school - Herefordshire Council

Childrens' Library Cards

Parents and carers of nursery and reception-aged children across Herefordshire are being encouraged to sign up their child for their very own library card as part of a new initiative from Herefordshire Libraries.

[New library cards launched to help Herefordshire children start their reading journey]

Hare Coursing



Hard to believe but in Herefordshire we have an issue with Hare coursing.

Organised gangs trespassing on farms who film dogs chasing Hares and then sell the films for betting in the far east.

West Mercia Police are working with our farming community and recently arrests have been made.

Report immediately if you see: • Vehicles driving across farmland or unsuitably for the area. • Groups with sighthounds. • Trespass, damage to crops, criminal damage or intimidation. • Suspicious rural activity. • In an emergency call 999. • For non-emergencies call 101. • Report online: westmercia.police.uk/report • CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111 100% anonymous.

Could your land help shape Herefordshire's future – Local Plan?

Herefordshire Council is inviting landowners, developers and other interested parties to put forward additional sites for consideration as work continues on the county's new Local Plan. The council has already received a substantial number of submissions through its Call for Sites exercise but wants to make sure no potential opportunities have been overlooked.

The new Local Plan will guide how land is used across Herefordshire into the future, helping to identify suitable locations for new homes, employment, infrastructure, community facilities and environmental improvements.

The latest invitation is an opportunity for anyone who has or has not previously put land forward to have their site considered, particularly those with larger areas of land that could help meet the county's future development needs. Sites that could accommodate, either on their own or in conjunction with neighbouring land, at least 500 new homes are of particular interest.

The council is also encouraging neighbouring landowners to consider whether working together could create additional opportunities. The Call for Sites is an evidence-gathering exercise. Submitting land does not mean it will automatically be allocated for

development or granted planning permission. All submissions will be assessed as part of the Local Plan process.

Landowners, developers, agents, parish councils and other interested parties are invited to submit sites for consideration at the earliest possible convenience, and no later than 10 December.
For further information, including how to submit a site, visit the **second call for sites webpage** **and** **Could your land help shape Herefordshire's future? - Herefordshire Council**

Hedge owner's responsibilities



Herefordshire Council is asking residents to make sure their hedgerows are a cut and maintained for the sake of safety and visibility on our streets.

With bird nesting season over, the Council's Streetscene team is asking landowners, farmers, agricultural tenants, housing associations, businesses and residents across the county to check their boundaries and cut back any hedges, trees or other vegetation that may be obstructing roads, footways and public routes.

Overgrown vegetation can extend across pavements, making it difficult for pedestrians to pass safely and, in some cases, forcing people closer to the road. It can also restrict visibility for drivers, particularly around junctions and bends, making it harder to see pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicles.

Landowners have a responsibility to ensure vegetation on their property does not obstruct roads, footways or public rights of way. I have encouraged some residents with large hedges to annually use an agricultural contractor who can do the job in an hour or less that could take you using hand equipment days.
Enforcement officers are currently inspecting the highway network and contacting landowners where action is needed. Landowners are being asked to check their boundaries and carry out any necessary trimming before formal action becomes necessary. If the Council has done the work the landowners will be billed.

Highways

With more than 6,200 tonnes of salt in stock and 17 gritters ready for action, Herefordshire Council is gearing up to help keep the county moving through another winter

Herefordshire gets ready for winter on the roads

My activity with the Police



This week I have I have been out with the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) over concerns raised by residents concerning speeding and driving without due care and attention.

In particular) in Brampton Abbotts Parish (Old Gore Memorial area) and Upton Bishop parishes (Opposite the village hall) We spent a little time with the handheld radar gun monitoring motorists to see if they were conforming to the speed limit. Traffic was light and as we were visible, as required, we did not have to note any vehicles – which is good. It is an event I do on a semi regular basis. If you have an area of concern, please let me know.

Highway – Winter

With winter approaching please report potholes and concern on the council website or use the emergency number.

PLEASE - Report Highway and other concerns

Go to Herefordshire Council website and type in 'Report a problem'
You can report Potholes, (helpful to have photos), missed bins, Street lighting, fly tipping etc
OR
To Report an Emergency; serious pothole, flooded road or highway obstruction

Telephone: 01432 261800

Police - information

POLICE

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

Ross on Wye Safer Neighbourhood Team - Neighbourhood Matters



You can read the June newsletter by clicking here - https://mailchi.mp/westmercia-pcc/pcc-newsletter-june2026-8425907

Or sign up to receive it regularly and direct into your inbox here - Newsletters | West Mercia PCC

Local Emergency Numbers

Reporting Highway Issues – Potholes, Defects, and dog poo reporting, blocked gullies, etc. online

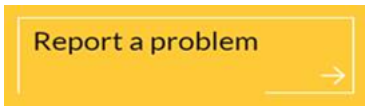
If you have a general service request, i.e. if you want to report a pothole etc., please use the link above, or call us, rather than emailing your steward. Using the link or the phone number ensures that the enquiry is dealt with promptly and efficiently. Locality Stewards do not have the resource to 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.

Please note that Herefordshire Council strongly encourages M Group 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-39NN73dA?u=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



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

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 -

Report illegally dumped rubbish by filling out the official Herefordshire Council Fly Tipping Form. You can also use the council's Fly Tipping Report App. For urgent waste blocking a public road, call 01432 261761
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.

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**

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.edgepilot.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

Flooded road or highway obstruction: Report a flood - Herefordshire Council 01432 2618000
By letting us know where and what happened, especially if it hasn't been reported, we and our partners can use the information which may help reduce the future impacts of flooding.

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

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

Welsh Water: 0800 052 0130 (Water emergencies) or 0800 085 3968 (Sewer emergencies) or visit www.contact.dwrcymru.com/
Severn Trent water: 0800 783 4444 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 (Water emergencies) or 0800 085 3968 (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. The consultation ends on 4th November, if you are late still submitting your thoughts.

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
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

Litter picking

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 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

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

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