



April 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

Firstly, may I wish you all a Happy Easter whilst we remember the religious reason for Easter.

So, Spring has finally arrived and I welcome the better weather, especially with our roads which I am informed was in the top ten of the wettest starts to the new year – it rained virtually every day from Jan 1st to end February. With the very wet and freezing conditions, of course, where water expands in cracks in the road and hence - potholes flourished.

In this month's update I cover the appointment of contractors for the first section of the Hereford Bypass, mark the latest phase of the new Hereford Fire Station, raising concerns of increased business rates on our local businesses with our MP, financial support for households off grid, Highways and the usual local contacts.



plays in our county.

The Lord Lieutenant Edward Harley presented the C.E.X. of Herefordshire Council Paul Walker with a Gold Award from the Armed Forces Covenant; in recognition of what the local authority does to support the armed forces, their families and veterans in the county. Over 180 businesses and organisations in Herefordshire are recognised by the Covenant reflecting the important role defence and the military



working alongside them to drive growth. Cllr Biggs brought together private sector partners to strengthen our economic development and inward investment

Businesses, developers and investors met together at the Herefordshire High Growth Forum in Ross-on-Wye for a special event where the huge potential and development opportunities of the Ross Enterprise Park strategic employment site were unveiled in full. The Leader again underlined to businesses how committed we are to

approaches. Cllr Bramer, whose vision and commitment have driven the realisation of Ross Enterprise Park.

Should you need to contact me, please feel free.

Kind regards

Barry

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Investment in Herefordshire

Back the Bypass



Herefordshire's 'Back the Bypass' campaign has officially launched with Council leaders, business representatives and other stakeholders coming together to see the transformational potential benefits the scheme could bring to the county.

The evening was well attended and very well received, with businesses and public sector partners sharing our enthusiasm, and visibly impressed by the progress. Please do take a look at the vision and the full story of what it can mean for the county – with. Thank you to the many members who attended.

['Back the Bypass' campaign officially launched to help unleash Herefordshire's future with new jobs, homes and growth envisioned - Herefordshire Council](#)

First Section of Hereford Bypass Begins This December



Herefordshire Council has appointed Civil engineering firm, Graham as the contractor to undertake detailed design and early technical work for the first phase of the Hereford Bypass, paving the way for construction to begin by December this year.

Following a comprehensive tender process launched last year, the contractor will work on the project, which will see a new road linking the A49 and A465 to the south-west of Hereford. A further tender process will see the final construction

contract being awarded in the summer.

The new 3.6km single-carriageway road will link the A49/Ross Road–Rotherwas Access Road roundabout with the A465 Abergavenny Road and provide a connection onwards to the B4349 Clehonger Road, completion in 2028. The scheme includes a series of underpasses and structures, including a new bridge over the Hereford-Newport railway line, to maintain regional and local access, and provision for walkers, cyclists, equestrians and wildlife.

The new highway will help reduce congestion at Asda roundabout and Belmont and open up the next phase of linking to the A49 to the west of the city.

The disappointment of course is that the Government had originally given the money for this section of highway but the change in Herefordshire politics in 2019-23 meant the money was handed back to Government and the purchased land sold back. Now the land is being repurchased and the funding borrowed by the Council.

More details: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/back-the-bypass>

Local Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Infrastructure Plan

Herefordshire Council has taken a major step forward in expanding transport choices and supporting active travel with the adoption of its updated Local Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Infrastructure Plan (LCWWIP).

[Herefordshire Council reveals plans to improve walking, cycling and wheeling across the county](#)

Internationally renowned lifestyle brand has chosen the city centre of Hereford

Following a real team effort by officers also paid off as we secured a new multi-national retail brand from Scandinavia to Hereford City Centre. Internationally renowned lifestyle brand Søstrene Grene has chosen the city centre of Hereford for its latest UK store - and will become a major anchor tenant in the Maylords shopping area.

[Global Scandi-lifestyle retail brand chooses Hereford City Centre - Herefordshire Council](#)

Ross-on-Wye Enterprise Park

A major new employment site designed to support business growth and attract investment to the county has been officially launched in Ross on Wye.

[Ross-on-Wye Enterprise Park launched to support business growth and investment in Herefordshire - Herefordshire Council](#)

Childrens' Safeguarding

This week we also had chance to formally thank Kevin Crompton whose time as the Independent Scrutineer for the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and independent Chair of our Safeguarding Adults Board has finished. His work has been invaluable in our improvement journey, and in ensuring statutory and third sector partners work together to look after the most vulnerable children, young people and adults in the county.

Meeting with Duchy of Cornwall's Estate – Homelessness Outreach Programme

A new Herefordshire Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2026–2031) and Delivery Action Plan has been launched, setting out innovative plans to prevent homelessness, as well as investing in accommodation and new targeted support services. Cllr Swinglehurst, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture, and I met with Rachel Price-Greenow, who heads the Duchy of Cornwall's estate in Herefordshire. The discussion included exploring opportunities for the Duchy to support our homelessness outreach programme and our work with schools. It follows the very well-received launch of our new Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping strategy recently, and it's a positive sign that even more partners are working with us on the shared goal of helping people facing this situation.

[Herefordshire launches five-year plan to cut homelessness with investment in new accommodation and innovative services - Herefordshire Council](#)

[Herefordshire Council launches homelessness prevention strategy - BBC News](#)

Protecting adults, children and young people – social workers



Social work staff at Herefordshire Council gave an insight into the huge range of vital work they do to support and protect adults, children and young people during Social Work Week at the end of March. Social work staff at Herefordshire Council have been giving an insight into the huge range of vital work they do to support and protect adults, children and young people during Social Work Week. Social workers are a vital

link in the safeguarding of our residents.

[Shining a light on Herefordshire's valued social care workers! - Herefordshire Council](#)

New Hereford Fire Station on Target



As Chairman of the Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority the Council Chairman had the pleasure to join our Fire Chief Jon Pryce and representatives of our contractors Speller Metcalfe to sign the steel marking the completion of the steel erection stage of the four-storey building.

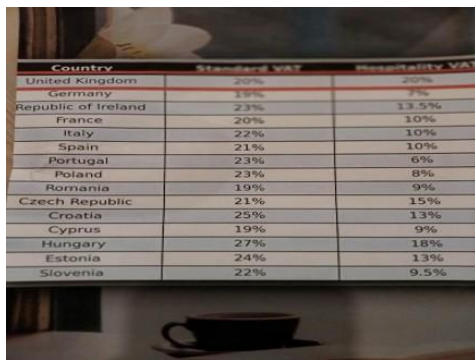


We searched for sites for over 15 years to replace the old 1951 building trying to identify other sites but had to build on our existing site. Despite the weather and a restricted area the project is on time with hand over forecast at the end of the year and following fit out we should be moving in and operating from next March.

Hereford has the only two full time crews in the County with all our other ten stations all crewed by on-call retained firefighters from the community. The four-storey new build is one of the highest buildings in the city- as the picture below shows the fourth floor is the same height as Cathedral Tower.



Huge Increases in Business rates hits our local businesses



Country	Standard VAT	Hospitality VAT
United Kingdom	20%	20%
Germany	19%	7%
Republic of Ireland	23%	13.5%
France	20%	10%
Italy	22%	10%
Spain	21%	10%
Portugal	23%	6%
Poland	23%	8%
Romania	19%	9%
Czech Republic	21%	15%
Croatia	25%	13%
Cyprus	19%	9%
Hungary	27%	18%
Estonia	24%	13%
Slovenia	22%	9.5%

The Government issued new increased business rates this year and local business have seen some huge rises in their bills. All sectors have been hit, with a local north Herefordshire haulage business seeing its business rates rise from 22k to 85K, but in particular we focused on the hospitality and tourism business.

The 542 tourism businesses who pay a levy to Visit Herefordshire to promote local tourism saw their business valuations increase by 4.7 million pounds

and there are a further 2,500 other smaller business in the county. Meanwhile the local supermarkets have seen increases in line with inflation despite their size and ability to absorb cost pressures.

Another issue was the difference across Europe on VAT taxes with most countries imposing VAT at half the 20% rate of the UK. **See figures in photograph above.**

These increases come on the back of the rise in National Insurance and the lowering of their thresholds, increases in the minimum wage, utility costs and leave many of our small business with very small margins. The message is clear we need to support our local businesses or lose them

Our north Herefordshire MP has written to the Treasury on the matter, and we wait to see their response.

Support for rising Energy costs for rural areas - Warm Homes Local Grant

DEFRA has contacted the Rural Services Network regarding the impact of off grid oil and gas price increases because of the USA/Iran war on rural communities. Homes in the countryside are not connected to national networks and therefore are outside government price control legislation. The problem is finding a scheme to support rural areas that is practical to deliver hence the targeting of low-income families who are already in the system. Based on the 2021 UK census Herefordshire has more than 13,600 homes using solely oil heating and nearly 3,000 on LPG. (18% of all households). With this Herefordshire has a very high proportion of such properties, based on 2021 UK Census data. It means an estimated c18% of the total 88,000 properties.

Herefordshire Council has secured £517,865 additional funding from government to help low-income households afford the huge increases in cost of oil and LPG. One national average price cited has highlighted the cost of LPG rising from 67 pence to £1.45 per litre in recent weeks. Eligibility for financial support through the fund is based on criteria

aligned to the Council's existing Warm Homes Local Grant programme. Households receive funding covering a proportion of the difference in cost between their previous average bills and the current price: household incomes £36,000 or below - 100%; £36,000 - £50,000 - 50%. Details on Council's website. The team has introduced this at pace and is already starting to get support out to people who have faced huge price rises in their energy supplies because of global issues. I realise this could affect a lot of people in your parishes. The email to use is: warmhomeslocalgrant@herefordshire.gov.uk.

[Low-income oil and LPG heating households urged to take up financial support in Herefordshire - Herefordshire Council](#)

Highways



The state of our highways is a major concern this year. The work delivered by the Council via Tarmac, included over 800 tonnes of tarmac, scrapping of the top surface and addressing significant drainage and ditching.

There is 37 million in the 2026/27 council's revenue and capital budgets for highways including funding for schemes for parish councils to help further with drainage issues. A lot of money but it has to cover over 2,000 miles of highways plus footpaths and pavements. For financial year 26/27 more than 140 roads across

Herefordshire are set to benefit from resurfacing and maintenance work as part of a wider £37 million investment in roads, footpaths and public spaces.

Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Infrastructure Plan

Herefordshire Council has taken a major step forward in expanding transport choices and supporting active travel with the adoption of its updated Local Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Infrastructure Plan (LCWWIP).

Our Local and County Environment

Garden Waste

Herefordshire Council's new Garden Waste Collection Service is about to get underway! Everyone will get their first collection between Monday 30 March 2026 and Friday 10 April, so now's the time to make sure your garden bin is ready.

[Don't forget to put your garden bins out! - Herefordshire Council](#)

Stop Fly-Tipping

Herefordshire Council is urging residents and businesses to take simple steps to ensure their waste is disposed of responsibly and legally as spring cleaning and garden clear-outs get underway.

[Stop Fly-Tipping at Source this Spring](#)

Gold Award for Armed Forces Covenant Partnership

Herefordshire Council joined a range of businesses who were formally presented with prestigious Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS) Gold Awards - the highest accolade available for supporting the Armed Forces community. The Chief Executive was proud to be presented with Armed Forces Covenant Partnership on behalf of the Council, covering a further five years, at a packed Armed Forces Covenant Partnership event. It's a testament to our continued commitment to supporting Armed Forces personnel, their families and service leavers. An important part of our role as an anchor institution is encouraging other employers across Herefordshire to do the same, and we know a remarkable 180+ employers of all shapes and sizes are actively now doing so, an outsized impact compared with other counties across the UK. Many thanks to Cllr Pete Stoddart, our Armed Forces Champion, for his leadership in this area, and to many others, including our Chairperson Cllr Roger Phillips, for their ongoing support, including at the event.

[Local employers honoured with Defence Gold Awards at major Armed Forces event - Herefordshire Council](#)

Free five-week Nordic walking

Herefordshire Council has organised a series of free five-week Nordic walking beginner courses in Hereford this April, running into National Walking Month in May. Previous courses have been very popular, often booking up within a day.

[Free Nordic walking courses coming to Hereford this spring - Herefordshire Council](#)

PCC seeking views of the public on the biggest police shake up to policing in 60 years

The Government announced that an independent review into these proposals would be carried out, which could see the existing structure of 43 police forces reduce to 12 – 15 the biggest shake up to policing in more than six decades. To ensure your views are heard, a public consultation has opened today and will run for three months. Have your voice heard by completing the online consultation.

This is the Police Crime Commissioner consultation link: [Complete the consultation](#)

Police - information



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](#)



Meet your safer neighbourhood team

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



Inspector
James Ashton



Sergeant
Alice Bennett

Rosson-Wye (rossonwye.snt@westmercia.police.uk)



PC Ben
Davidson
07929 783672



PC Simon
Harradine
07773 054173



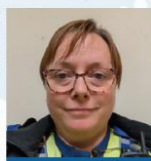
PC Daryl
Kift
07773 034256



PC John
Townsend
07773 053615



PCSO Kirsten
Kysow
07773 034152



PCSO Claire
Denton
07866 215011



PCSO David
Alexander
07773 049929

Fuel Thefts

Police have been asked about fuel thefts and the effect of recent spikes in prices. Below is a guide to help protect tanks in particular heating oil. The same principals apply for commercial settings. A relatively small investment could save you thousands of pounds.

Where possible please consider -

- Fuel tanks should be visible from the house to increase the chance of a thief being seen
- Use motion-sensor security lighting and consider installing a motion-sensor alarm in this area
- Use locking fuel caps and fit anti-siphoning devices
- Focus CCTV cameras on the tank
- Install cages or plant prickly plants around the tanks. It is important to screen your tank so that it cannot be seen from the road
- Install a fuel tank alarm – either one that triggers when the cap is tampered with or one that alerts the owner when the fuel level suddenly drops. More advanced systems can be linked to security lighting or send a text message to alert the owner
- The police can only recommend products that have been attack tested and come with the Secured by Design Police Preferred Specification accreditation. The following two websites have a range of these suitable security products: [Secured by Design – Secured by Design](#) and [Sold Secure – Security Product Testing & Approval](#)

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

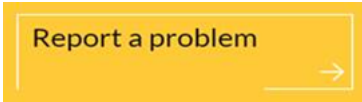
https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/190/report_problems_on_the_road

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