



September 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



What a summer we have experienced. There are many lessons to learn about how our climate is changing and we can be thankful that our two hot summers had a very wet winter in between filling our reservoirs.

Regrettably some of fires are not down to the weather but deliberate arson attacks. Police are investigating 12 suspected arsons including several farm fires on a corridor area following the A480. Our council chairman recently attended a meeting with the Police and over 70 farmers hearing first hand of their worries and concerns, two recent farm fires involved trapped livestock and while all were saved the stress to the animals was huge.

[Above: recent suspected Arson Farm Fire]

Given the extreme weather we seem to experience there have been meetings with our council's flood team on preparation for winter and will work with Parish Councils on strengthening local resilience. I have provided one of my parish's emergency plans to perhaps assist all parish councils with a template for their emergency plan. If any of my parish council would like to form their own emergency plan, I would be delighted to put them in touch with the parish council chairman who has authored the plan

Herefordshire students have celebrated another strong year of A Level and GCSE results. At A level an impressive 98.7% pass rate (A*-E). This exceeds both the West Midlands average of 97.4% and the national average for England of 97.9%.

The GCSE results continue to be impressive with 69.1% of Herefordshire young people achieving a Grade 4 or above in all subjects, this is significantly above the West Midlands average of 66.6%. Performance in both English and Maths has been particularly strong, with the Herefordshire outcomes in both English and Maths at Grade 4 and above beating the West Midlands and England averages results. English at Grade 4 or above averages at 64.8% for Herefordshire, which is well above the West Midlands at 55.5% and England at 59.5%. Maths is similarly impressive at 65.3%, with the West Midlands at 52.4%, and the England average at 57.2%. Herefordshire students also excelled in their Combined Science results with averages of 63.6%, compared to West Midlands at 52.7% and England averages at 58.1%. A clear endorsement of the strong professional standards of our schools.

Should you need to contact me, please feel free.

Kind regards

Barry

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Council News

Council

Pavement Licenses



More cafés, restaurants and pubs across Herefordshire could soon offer outdoor seating after the council announced a 70 per cent reduction in pavement licence fees. There is an initiative in supporting hospitality business by reducing the pavement licence fees by 70%. Pavement licences allow businesses including cafés, restaurants, pubs and coffee shops to place tables, chairs and other approved removable furniture on the public highway outside their premises. The cost of a new pavement license will fall from £500 to £150, while renewal fees will reduce from £350 to £105.

[Boost for Herefordshire's high streets as Council cuts pavement licence fees](#)

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Council has published its Herefordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) which will provide a framework for coordinated action to help nature recover across the county – identifying where improvements to habitats could deliver the greatest benefits for wildlife, the environment and local communities.

The strategy includes a Local Habitat Map, showing important existing areas for biodiversity as well as locations where action could create or improve habitats for nature. It also sets out 37 priorities and 100 measures and supporting actions, covering some of the habitats and species most important to Herefordshire – from rivers, wetlands, woodlands and traditional orchards to hedgerows, grasslands, farmland and nature-rich urban areas.

Emergency Accommodation project

Work is progressing on a £3.8 million project to transform the former John Venn Building in Hereford, previously known as the John Haider Building, into high-quality emergency accommodation for people facing homelessness.

[Work progresses on new emergency accommodation for Herefordshire](#)

Challenging Summer for our Fire service



Since May the fire service have attended over 800 outdoor fires with nearly 300 incidents a week compared to our norm of 150 incidents. The nature and size of these incidents and the fact that this is also happening with our neighbouring Fire Authorities and nationally has posed them some significant challenges, however they are well prepared and equipped to face these challenges. They are attending many mid-size incidents requiring between 4-8 appliances (fire engines), often concurrent and requiring over 24-hour cover plus supporting neighbouring fire services.

August 13th saw this activity peak with around 40 serious incidents attended in one day. Our county fire service supplied several crews and engines to support West Midlands Fire service at the major incident at Stourbridge where 19 houses were destroyed, and our own serious incident at Pershore which saw three houses destroyed by fire and seven more damaged, with over 30 people evacuated. Whilst we were immensely proud of the fire crews operating under very challenging conditions and preventing many more houses being destroyed in Pershore, this was also a superb multi-agency effort to coordinate support to the local community.



My thanks goes to the professionalism of our firefighters and staff for working to protect our communities in tough situations and conditions. Also, the support of the farming community helping create firebreaks, also and importantly also the employers of retained firefighters who saw less of their employees, and the public for their assistance and support. Lots of lessons to learn from this summer and the impact of our changing climate.

Last month also saw the publication of the Government's inspection of HWFRS which rated our fire service as good with no significant causes for concern or major issues highlighted in the report.

[Above : Picture of the Potato Sheds Fire at Milton]

The Chief Inspector Katherine Stone said "I congratulate Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service on its performance in keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks. The service has made strong progress and continues to demonstrate clear and sustained improvement. This is supported by a robust governance structure with stable, self-aware leadership and improved data and intelligence to support decision-making at all levels. This progress has been achieved through the work of dedicated staff at all levels."

All of this has to be taken in the context of a Service that has a decade of financial challenges, most recently in 2025/26 being forced to make £1.2m of cuts in a 45m budget.

Bypass update

Phase one of Hereford Bypass set to go ahead



Herefordshire Council has published the Full Business Case for Phase One of the Hereford Bypass, marking another important step towards delivering new transport infrastructure and supporting future growth across the county.

The bypass is part of an ambitious program of major projects being progressed by Herefordshire Council to improve transport, support businesses, strengthen communities and create better places across the county. Phase One of the Hereford Bypass represents a significant investment in the future of Herefordshire's transport network.

Phase One of the by-pass will provide a new 3.6km link between the A49 and A465, creating a more direct route to the Rotherwas Industrial Estate and Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ). It will help improve connections, reduce pressure on existing routes and support future development.

The Full Business Case explains how the scheme will help address current transport challenges while supporting wider plans for economic growth across the county. It is scheduled to begin this December ahead of the local government elections in May.

The real sadness about this is that having the planning permission, land purchased and Government funding to pay for it all in place in 2019 the previous administration pulled the project and sent the funding back to Government.!

We now have to borrow the increased funding required and the strain will be on our council tax bills. Phase One is the first stage of the wider Hereford Western Bypass which is required to support our infrastructure around the City with the Government's requirement to provide 30,000 houses in the next 20 years. The cost of that will need funding from central government and housing development.

Weekly Food collections starting next year



Herefordshire Council's Cabinet has approved the introduction of a new weekly food waste collection service from September 2027. The new countywide service will provide households with kitchen caddies, an initial roll of compostable liners and outdoor food waste containers, making it easier for residents to recycle food waste separately from their general rubbish.

Cabinet approved a single countywide rollout after considering a range of delivery options. The approach offers the best value for money, minimises delivery risk and gives the council time to put in place the vehicles, equipment and infrastructure needed to launch the new service successfully.

Preparations over the next year will include procuring new collection vehicles and containers, making improvements at council depots and delivering a comprehensive communications campaign to help residents understand how the service will work before collections begin.

The introduction of separate weekly food waste collections is part of the Government's Simpler Recycling reforms, which require councils across England to provide the service.

Once fully established, the new service is expected to collect around 6,500 tonnes of food waste each year, helping to increase Herefordshire's recycling rate and reduce the amount of waste sent for disposal. The programme would also produce electricity as part of the treatment process as well as producing nutrient-rich bio-fertiliser.

The Council has already secured £1.85 million in Government funding towards the vehicles, containers and equipment needed to introduce the new service.

Fridges and Freezer's moratorium

Herefordshire residents are being asked not to take fridges or freezers to household recycling centres from Wednesday 19 August.

[**Fridges and freezers temporarily not accepted at Herefordshire recycling centres**](#)

Layby rubbish initiative

Herefordshire Council is launching a new hard-hitting campaign to tackle littering in laybys across the county, including the irresponsible disposal of bottles, food waste, packaging and other rubbish.

[**Love Our Laybys - hard-hitting new campaign targets littering in Herefordshire**](#)

Supported housing for young people

The first specialist supported housing in Ross-on-Wye for young people who have faced major barriers in life, such as care leavers, rough sleeping, and being homeless has been opened by Herefordshire Council.

[**New housing to change young people's lives: Ross-on-Wye development completes £2m+ Council programme for 18-25 year olds facing major challenges**](#)

New Special School

The council has launched a public consultation on plans to create a new 40-place special school for children aged 4 to 11 with Moderate and Additional Learning Difficulties (MALD) and other complex special educational needs

[**Have your say on proposals for a new special school in Ross-on-Wye**](#)

Small projects funding

Funding offered for small projects to improve community connections and mental wellbeing. Local people and groups across Herefordshire can get up to £250 towards a new or existing project that could make communities stronger and improve mental health and wellbeing.

[**Funding offered for small projects to improve community connections and mental wellbeing**](#)

Funding for additional school places

Herefordshire Council is set to invest more than £9 million of Department for Education (DfE) capital grant funding to support additional local school places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

[Council invests over £9 million in grant funding to support more local school places for children and young people with SEND](#)

Highways

Work is continuing on a major improvement scheme on Holme Lacy Road, with the first two phases of the project expected to be completed this month, subject to final checks.

[Holme Lacy Road improvement scheme reaches major milestone as key phases near completion](#)

College Road bridge

New temporary traffic and safety arrangements are being introduced around College Road as Herefordshire Council continues work to manage the closure of the College Road footbridge and develop plans for its long-term replacement.

[New traffic arrangements and safety measures as Council develops bid to replace College Road footbridge](#)

Enforcement

Scrap Dealers fined



Three members of the same family who were operating as scrap metal collectors have been ordered to pay a combined £19,485 after being prosecuted by Herefordshire Council for waste offences.

[Three scrap metal collectors ordered to pay almost £19,500 for waste offences](#)

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.



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](#)

Public confidence in West Mercia Police is on the rise

According to the results of the PCC's latest perception survey, 81% of people say they have confidence in West Mercia Police – up 2% from last year.

Other results include:

- ✅ 70% believe they would receive a good level of service from the force
- ✅ 58% think West Mercia Police is doing a good or excellent job
- 🚗 Confidence in how roads are policed has jumped by 10%, with 72% of residents now feeling assured
- 👮 Visible policing remains consistent, with more than 1 in 5 residents saying they see an officer or PCSO at least once a week

You can find out more, including the results specific to your area, by clicking on the link below:

[Confidence in West Mercia Police continues to increase | 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-](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

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](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.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](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.wvutilities.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_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