



October 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

It is good to be writing this autumn ward report. The heat of the summer heatwaves is behind us, and we look forward to the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, close bosom-friend of the maturing sun. – to quote Keats.

In this ward report I cover. Preparation works are underway for the first phase of Hereford Bypass being the new link between the A49 and the A465, improving access from the southwest of the county and South Wales, and helping to reduce traffic on Belmont Road, Asda roundabout and nearby rural routes currently used as shortcuts. There is still active opposition to the building of any new road but I believe the overwhelming majority of residents and businesses believe this is long overdue.

The news that the government's initiative of a £2 maximum single fare being taken up by a county's significant bus operator.

In this month's update, I am pleased to share an open letter from the Council Chairman, Cllr Roger Phillips, to the Prime Minister, calling for rural communities to receive the recognition and investment they deserve. championing the case for fairer funding, improved infrastructure, and greater recognition of rural challenges.

Also, the reporting of an appalling incident of a physical attack on one of our civil enforcement officers, for just for doing his job.

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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Rural Bus Travel



I am particularly pleased that Sergeants will be joining the £2 maximum single fare scheme in the new year. At a time when many rural communities rely on bus services to access work, education, healthcare and local shops, this is a welcome investment in affordable public transport. Rural operators face very different challenges from those in urban areas, serving dispersed communities over long distances with lower passenger numbers. Despite these pressures, Sergeants continues to provide a vital service, operating 24 routes across Herefordshire and into Wales. The £2 fare cap will help make bus travel more accessible, support rural connectivity and ease the cost-of-living pressures faced by many local residents

Chairman's open letter



While the Government's pledge of "growth in every postcode" is encouraging, that ambition must translate into meaningful action for places like Herefordshire, where the costs of delivering services and supporting economic growth are often higher than in urban areas. As Chair of the Rural Services Network, Roger has been championing the case for fairer funding, improved infrastructure, and greater recognition of rural challenges. He has also met with senior Government official **Max Soule** to press the case for rural communities, particularly in relation to rising fuel costs and the need for policies that reflect the realities of countryside living.

OPEN LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER

As Chair of the Rural Services Network following the Network's National Rural Conference, reflecting the experiences and priorities shared by our members across rural England I enclose extract from the letter we have sent to Andy Burham. "Over four days, rural leaders, local authority representatives, policymakers, service providers and practitioners came together to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing rural communities, and what those communities need to thrive.

Your government has set itself the ambition of delivering "good growth in every postcode". We welcome that commitment. For the 9.7 million people living in rural England, it raises an important question: what will good growth mean in their communities, and how will they know it has reached them?

The experience of Greater Manchester has demonstrated the value of understanding place and giving local leaders the ability to respond to local circumstances. That same

principle must apply across every part of the country, including rural communities within and outside mayoral strategic authorities.

Rural England has enormous potential. It is home to innovative businesses, skilled people, natural resources and communities capable of contributing even more to national prosperity. Research commissioned by the Rural Coalition found that, with the right conditions for growth, rural economies could generate up to £19 billion in additional annual tax revenues.

But growth does not happen in isolation. Businesses need people with the right skills. People need homes they can afford. Communities need access to health and care. Workers and young people need transport and digital connectivity. Councils need the resources to provide the services and infrastructure on which thriving places depend. Drawing on the conference discussions and the experiences shared by our members, we are asking your government to act on six priorities:

1. Unlock rural growth

Recognise rural economies as an integral part of the national growth agenda and invest in the skills, infrastructure and services that enable rural businesses to recruit, innovate and grow.

2. Make fair funding truly fair

Recognise the additional costs of delivering services across large geographical areas to dispersed populations. Rural residents currently pay, on average, 17% more per head in council tax than their urban counterparts while receiving less government-funded spending power. Fair funding is not special treatment; it is funding that reflects what comparable services genuinely cost to deliver.

3. Recognise the rural cost of living

Longer journeys limited public transport, off-grid heating, housing pressures and distance from essential services can all increase household costs. Policies intended to improve living standards must recognise these realities and use evidence capable of identifying rural hardship that national averages can hide.

4. Deliver the right homes in the right places

Only 9% of homes in rural areas are classified as affordable, compared with 19% in urban areas. Rural communities need genuinely affordable homes of the right size and tenure, connected to employment, infrastructure and services.

5. Connect rural communities to opportunity

Connectivity is not simply the availability of broadband or the number of buses operating. It is whether somebody can get to work, attend college, see a doctor, run a business or access an essential service. Digital and physical connectivity must be considered together and measured by the opportunities people can actually reach.

6. Make national ambition work in every place

Housing, transport, health, digital connectivity, net zero and economic growth will not look the same in every community. Rural needs must be considered when policies

are designed, not added as an afterthought. That requires meaningful rural proofing across government, a strong rural voice within devolution and local growth plans, and measures that make rural need and rural success visible.

With the Autumn Budget, the fiscal devolution roadmap and the forthcoming Rewiring the State White Paper, decisions being taken now will shape how growth, investment and public services are delivered across England for years to come.

We ask you to ensure that:

- the Autumn Budget, fiscal devolution roadmap and Rewiring the State White Paper explicitly address the conditions needed for rural growth;
- rural proofing is embedded across all government departments and led from the centre of government, rather than treated solely as a matter for Defra;
- national ambitions are supported by rural measures and transparent reporting; and
- rural communities, both within and outside mayoral strategic authorities, have a meaningful voice in the decisions affecting them.

Rural communities are not asking for national ambition to be lowered. They are asking for it to be designed so that it can succeed in every kind of place.

The Rural Services Network and our members stand ready to work constructively with your Government. We would welcome the opportunity for further discussion with ministers and officials about how these priorities can help make good growth in every postcode a reality for rural England.”

Cllr Roger Phillips - Chair of Rural Services Network

Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC)

Over this year the LGBC have been reviewing the ward allocation to residents ratio for Herefordshire Council, to ensure that the numbers of residents within each ward is broadly comparable. With regard to Old Gore Ward, their initial consideration of including Sellack parish council has been reconsidered. The final outcome is that Old Gore ward parish council areas will remain unaltered, even though our resident ratio is - 12% overall. I attach the LGBC final report, which provides and explanation, and the “Final Recommendations on the new electoral arrangements”



herefordshire_final_r
ecommendations_full

[fr - summary - herefordshire.pdf](#)

Council Finance

Worthy of recognition and congratulations for their financial work to Cllr Pete Stoddart, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, Rachael Sanders, our Director of Finance and her team for once again being among the first councils in the country to submit their Statement of Accounts. This is a significant achievement and reflects the professionalism, expertise and dedication of colleagues who work tirelessly to maintain high standards of financial stewardship and transparency.

After four months of detailed audit work, our external auditors have issued an unqualified opinion on the 2025/26 Statement of Accounts. They have confirmed that the accounts give a true and fair view of the council's financial position, have been properly prepared in accordance with the relevant accounting code and meet statutory requirements. This provides valuable and timely independent assurance to members and residents that our financial information can be relied upon to support sound decision-making and financial planning.

[Herefordshire Council Financial Statements 2025-26](#)

Herefordshire Futures Bursary

It has also been encouraging to see positive news about opportunities for local people this week. The Herefordshire Futures Bursary, offered through Hereford College of Arts and Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College, is designed to help college leavers and career changers overcome financial barriers to higher education and develop the skills they need for their future careers. The newly launched fund will provide eligible students with up to £3,000 during their higher education studies, helping remove financial barriers and support local residents in developing the higher-level skills needed by employers across the county.

[Herefordshire Futures Bursary](#)

Council Trading Standards officers recently stepped in to help two Herefordshire residents in their 80s after salesmen arrived at their homes falsely purporting to be surveyors. They were offering bogus loft insulation surveys with the sole intention of conning them into unnecessary work at a grossly inflated price.

Herefordshire Council is warning residents to be on their guard against cold callers offering loft insulation and claiming to be from or working with the Council or government

[Council officers step in to help residents avoid potential loft insulation scam](#)

Rural Economy - Farming, innovation and backing Herefordshire's rural economy

Last month the Leader of the Council (Cllr. Jonathan Lester) visited Green Farm, Felton as part of the NFU's Back British Farming campaign. Spending time with the Simcock family and seeing their operation at first hand was a useful reminder of the opportunities and the pressures facing farming today. Here is an article by Cllr Jonathan Lester, Leader of Herefordshire Council

Farming, innovation and backing Herefordshire's rural economy

Business Matters - Kings Award - again



I am delighted to report the presentation of the Kings Award for Enterprise to one of the County's specialist military businesses, who had previously won an award in 2019.

Simon Davies established Spectra Group in Herefordshire in 2002, following a military service. The business grew from a clear operational need: reliable communications for people working in remote, demanding or hostile environments.

Spectra designs, engineers and manufactures secure voice, data and satellite communications systems for defence and security users worldwide. SlingShot established Spectra internationally by extending the reach of existing tactical radios through satellite communications. They are now building on that heritage with new software-defined tactical communications system, designed to evolve as operational requirements and technologies change.

Their HQ is in Herefordshire, but other sites are in USA and Australia and rapid growing business. Herefordshire is home to many such businesses which bring employment and prestige to our county.

Highways

Herefordshire Council has begun preparatory works on the first phase of the Hereford Bypass, including site preparation, fencing, ground investigations, trial holes and drainage and pavement surveys. Cabinet will be asked to note the developments since the award of an early-stage contract that allows the council to develop the detailed design, test assumptions, identify risks and refine costs before construction begins.



In the longer term, the scheme will form the anchor point for the full bypass route to the West of Hereford, which, when delivered, will alleviate traffic congestion through the city, and unlock land that could support up to 14,000 new homes and employment space for up to 10,000 jobs. Herefordshire is required by government to plan for 27,000 homes in the county by 2041, and the bypass forms an important part of enabling that growth in a planned and sustainable way. The bypass remains strategically important to Hereford's wider transport strategy. It will support housing growth, economic development, improved access to the Hereford Enterprise Zone and the long-term ambition to improve connectivity around the city

[Preparatory works begin on first phase of Hereford Bypass as Cabinet considers next steps ahead of full construction](#)

Highway Issues

PLEASE Report Highway and other highways 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

Housing – five-year land supply

Herefordshire continues to see new homes delivered across the county, with 677 net additional dwellings completed during 2025/26, despite a challenging planning and development environment. This strong level of delivery reflects the council's long-term approach to strategic and sustainable growth, working with communities, developers and partners to bring forward new homes in the right locations.

Alongside these positive delivery figures, the council has published its latest five-year housing land supply position, which stands at **2.81 years**. While this is below the national requirement of five years, it is important to understand that the change is primarily the result of significant changes to national planning policy.

In December 2024, the Government introduced a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and a new method for calculating housing need. Prior to the introduction of the revised NPPF, Herefordshire's five-year housing land supply stood at **5.73 years** and had consistently remained above the national requirement. This increased Herefordshire's annual housing requirement from **773 homes to 1,362 a year – an increase of more than 75 per cent**. As a result, the amount of land the council must demonstrate its availability for housing development increased significantly overnight.

The latest position has also been affected by changes to what can be counted towards housing supply. For example, around 250 homes on the allocated Hardwick Bank site in Bromyard can no longer be included following the refusal of a planning application. National policy has also introduced stricter requirements around when proposed housing sites can be counted as deliverable.

The annual position on our Five-Year Housing Land Supply is now available on our [website](#) with 677 net additional dwellings were completed during 2025/26, despite a challenging planning and development environment. This strong level of delivery reflects the council's long-term approach to strategic and sustainable growth, working with communities, developers and partners to bring forward new homes in the right locations.

[Herefordshire continues to see new homes delivered across the county](#)

Enforcement

Herefordshire Council has condemned a vicious attack on one of its staff in Hereford and is working closely with West Mercia Police following the incident. The officer was attacked in Union Street on Monday, 31 August, and was kicked to the ground and then kicked multiple times while on the ground. Members of the public intervened during the incident. The Council worker went to hospital following the attack. He has suffered severe bruising but, following medical checks, is not believed to have sustained any other serious injuries.

[Herefordshire Council condemns attack on enforcement officer](#)

Council investigates significant fly-tip at Haugh Woods



Herefordshire Council is investigating a significant fly-tip discovered at Haugh Woods after enforcement officers visited the site this week. The waste appears to have come from a complete bathroom refit, including a bath, radiators, flooring, wall and ceiling materials. Officers have recorded details of the waste and taken photographs as part of the investigation. Some of the items have distinctive features,

including a shower curtain, blue mosaic tiles bordering white tiles, grey laminate flooring and gold-coloured tile trim.

The Council is appealing to anyone who recognises the materials or has information about who may have dumped the waste to come forward. Enforcement officers have attended the site and are actively investigating the incident. The council will arrange for the fly-tip to be cleared up once the initial investigation is complete.



Anyone with information about the Haugh Woods fly-tip should quote incident number 432738 and contact the Community Protection Team at: ehtssapcommunity@herefordshire.gov.uk

[Council investigates significant fly-tip at Haugh Woods](#)

Police - information



POLICE

Over 120,000 people have already shared their thoughts in a major new research study exploring people's views and experiences of crime, anti-social behaviour, and policing in the UK.



We've noticed you haven't started the survey yet, and it's not too late.

On average, it takes 10 minutes to complete, and it is entirely multiple-choice. No questions are mandatory, so you can skip any you would rather not answer. If you get distracted, you can save your progress as you go and come back whenever you wish.

Please take a few minutes to have your say!



[Please click here to complete the survey](#)

Why take part?

Your views matter. We want to hear from people with a range of experiences and opinions, whether positive, negative, or somewhere in between.

You do not need to have had contact with the police to take part. Every response helps build a better understanding of what matters most to local communities.

FAQs

You may want to learn more before proceeding. You can access the survey's FAQs on our website [here](#). Please note that it will take you away from this page. The survey will remain open until Monday 5th October.

Thank you!

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.edgipilot.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