

# Herefordshire Now

The residents' magazine from Herefordshire Council | Issue 3 |

Spring 2019



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# Welcome

With the eagerly anticipated Brick History exhibition arriving in March, people of all ages are busy recreating our county's most recognisable landmarks in LEGO®. We certainly have some amazingly creative people living in Herefordshire – if you get a chance to visit the exhibition this spring, please do so.

With around 70% of the council's income coming from Council Tax, this issue of Herefordshire Now takes a look at how this money is spent to benefit the county's residents.

Getting the best value for money is not only about how it is spent, but also about reducing waste where possible. Our articles on energy saving projects and on the 'hand it back' campaign, encouraging the return of medical equipment that is no longer being used, show just a couple of ways we are aiming to reduce waste and save thousands of pounds each year.

We hope you find this issue of Herefordshire Now informative. Please get in touch and let us know what you think. Contact us: herefordshirenow@herefordshire.gov.uk

# Your vote is your voice

Register to vote at this year's local elections: gov.uk/register-to-vote

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Cover photo: Lego® in Hereford

We have printed 3,000 copies of this magazine at a cost of £398

# Journey through history in LEGO®



16 March – 18 May 2019  
Brick History @ Hereford Museum and Art Gallery

Warren Elsmore's Brick History exhibition takes famous moments from history and imagines them in LEGO® bricks. From DNA and the Big Bang to Mozart, Martin Luther King and mobile phones, LEGO® artist Warren Elsmore and his team have created a celebration of our shared stories, struggles, and triumphs, made from everyone's favourite Danish toy. From tiny recreations of Concorde and the Titanic that could fit in your hand, to a 1.5m square medieval castle bustling with activity, there are models to make you smile, to make you think, and to inspire you to build a better world.

Pivotal moments of history will be retold in LEGO®, and the exhibition is sure to delight all generations. Relive historical moments through inspirational models, an activity zone with soft bricks and LEGO® building and modelling for all ages, Hereford City LEGO® trail, free prize draw, plus special 'Family Saturday' and holiday activities.

Advanced booking is advised. Tickets: £3.50 adult, £2.00 child, under 5's free, £8.50 family

School bookings also available at £60 per class.

For more details and online booking visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/LegoBrickHistory](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/LegoBrickHistory)



# School Transport Disruption Alerts

Parents and carers can keep up-to-date with any school transport disruption by registering for Herefordshire Council's free alert service. Sign up for email and text updates by visiting the school and college transport page [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schoolalert](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schoolalert)

You can also view the latest alerts on Twitter by following [www.twitter.com/hfdsschools](http://www.twitter.com/hfdsschools) or [www.twitter.com/hfdscouncil](http://www.twitter.com/hfdscouncil)



## Free online parenting courses



It's not easy being a parent. From dealing with the terrible twos to potty training, every day can be a challenge. Herefordshire Council has invested in free online parenting courses to help families support a child from pregnancy until the age of 18.

The award winning courses are available to parents, grandparents,

carers, foster parents, family members and friends – all you need is a Herefordshire postcode!

The three available courses are:

- Understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby
- Understanding your baby
- Understanding your child

## Are you eligible for free childcare?



If you're a parent or carer of a child aged 2 and above you may be entitled to up-to 15 hours of funded childcare per week.

Working parents and carers of a 3 or 4 year old could be entitled to up-to 30 hours of funded childcare in a nursery, school facility or at a childminders.

You can check if you are eligible by visiting [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/nef](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/nef)

For help to complete the application form contact the Children and Families Business Support team on 01432 261584 or email [educationandbusiness@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:educationandbusiness@herefordshire.gov.uk)



To access the online courses visit [www.inourplace.co.uk](http://www.inourplace.co.uk) and register your details. You must use the Herefordshire access code APPLEHERE and the courses will be completely free of charge. Course support is available Mon - Fri 9am-5pm on 0121 296 4448 or email [solihull.approach-parenting@heartofengland.nhs.uk](mailto:solihull.approach-parenting@heartofengland.nhs.uk)

## Talking community with Parish Councillors

Across the county, more than a thousand parish councillors regularly volunteer their time to support their community and plan services to meet local need. In January, representatives of 58 Herefordshire parish councils came together with Herefordshire Council and town councillors to explore ways to address some of the key challenges

common to many communities, share good practice and offer mutual support.

A key topic for discussion included the development of talk community hubs, a place where people can go, close to their home, to find out what is going on in their community and get involved. It has been shown that

people lead healthier and happier lives when they are engaged in activities they enjoy and build a social support network. It will be important for each parish to identify what needs to be in place for talk community hubs to work in their area, and the support needed to ensure they are really making a difference.

For more information about the role of parish councils in the community, visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/parishcouncils](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/parishcouncils)



Herefordshire is home to a wide variety of businesses, large and small. Herefordshire Council is working to develop infrastructure, build skills and encourage investment to promote economic growth and ensure the county's future prosperity.

## Spring start for Ross Enterprise Park development



Work is set to start on-site in spring on the first phase of development of employment land at the new Ross Enterprise Park.

The council is working with its development partner, ENGIE, to develop 8.5 acres of serviced commercial land for businesses and developers to undertake their own commercial design and build. Works will include the construction of site access, internal roads, groundworks, utilities and drainage.

The first phase of the project alone is anticipated to generate up to 250 new jobs for local people and provide space for around 20 local businesses.

When complete, Ross Enterprise Park, positioned to the east of Ross-on-Wye in the Hildersley area, will provide up to 300,000 square feet of new commercial floorspace and up to 1,000 jobs. The business park has excellent transport links, including immediate access to the M50 and the A449 which links to the nearby M4 corridor.

## Business rates relief

Bills for business rates will soon be sent out, but did you know that some properties are eligible for reductions?

A new business rates discount has been announced for eligible retailers which could reduce bills by up to one third over the next two financial years. Eligible retail premises may qualify for additional business rate relief, which will be applied after the retail discount has been awarded. Other business rate reliefs available for eligible occupied properties are:

- Small business rate relief
- Hardship relief
- Rural rate relief
- Charitable rate relief
- Relief for pubs
- Discretionary business rates relief revaluation scheme

If the discount has not been awarded and you believe you should be eligible, email [businessrates@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:businessrates@herefordshire.gov.uk)

visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/businessratesrelief](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/businessratesrelief)



## Shell Store transformation

Work is underway on a £7.3m transformation of Hereford's historic Shell Store into a flagship business incubation and innovation centre.

The redevelopment of the former munitions site on Skylon Park, Rotherwas, will provide high quality accommodation and support services to new or young enterprises.

The Shell Store will provide employment space for up to 25 dynamic and innovative businesses, driving economic growth through the generation of around 128 new jobs by 2023 – rising to more than 450 by 2031.

The project is being funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Herefordshire Council and a loan from the Marches LEP's Marches Investment Fund.

The centre is due to be completed in Spring 2020.



# A guide to your Council Tax

Your Council Tax funds many services across the county, from waste collection and road repair and maintenance, to looking after children and adults who may need extra support.

This year we need to increase your Council Tax by 4.9%, and we want to explain why.

Since 2010, the government has cut our core funding by around 99% - from £60.1m to £600,000 in 2019. Herefordshire Council has risen to this challenge by delivering substantial savings of £90m over the last nine years, reviewing services, increasing financial reserves and consistently delivering balanced budgets.

Yet there continues to be pressure on our county's health and social care with an increasing demand for our services, particularly in helping residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives.

Central government funding will end completely by 2020. Council Tax is a vital way to raise money to fund the services we all use and keep investing in our communities.

## **Last year we worked to:** *Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life*



100% of early years' group settings inspected were judged as good or outstanding



We taught 93.5% of children in primary schools judged by Ofsted as good or outstanding



77.6% of pupils in the secondary phase were in good or outstanding schools



We looked after 300 children in care

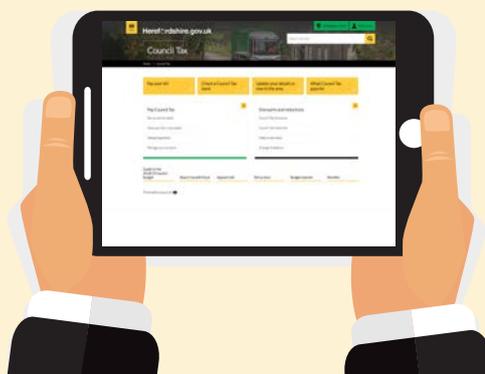
# How your Council Tax is spent

The receipt shows how your Council Tax is used to fund services in your community.

Around 70% of Herefordshire Council's main income comes from Council Tax. A 4.9% increase in Council Tax will add just over £104m to this year's budget.

The adult social care precept will remain at 2% to keep Council Tax as low as possible, but this can only be spent on delivering adult social care across the county. The remaining 2.9% will be used to fund other vital services, such as looking after children, waste collection, libraries and road repair and maintenance.

From April, an average band D property will now pay Council Tax at £126.22 per month (over 12 months). This excludes the individual precepts set by each parish council, West Mercia Police and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service which will be decided in March 2019.



Herefordshire Council	
Charges per month (average Band D property) 2019/20 Monthly Council Tax receipt	
<b>** Daily life **</b>	
* Bin collections and Environment	£13.72
* Roads, bridges and care of public spaces	7.35
* Schools and education	104.61
* Buses and community transport	6.39
* Libraries, records and customer services	1.30
<b>** Looking after adults **</b>	
* Older People in residential/nursing care	13.28
* Older people supported at home	9.17
* Disabled adults	27.55
* Lifestyles services (substance abuse, sexual health)	2.64
* Health improvement (Public Health nursing, health checks, smoking cessation)	5.61
* Housing	0.52
<b>** Looking after children **</b>	
* Child protection	4.72
* Children in care	15.19
* Children with special needs	3.53
<b>** Local government running costs **</b>	
* Election, governance and legal services	3.24
* Directors & Staff costs	0.65
* Organisational administration	1.41
* IT, Transactions and billing (Hoople)	5.19
* Insurance and property maintenance	5.08
* Capital finance - Debt repayment	7.35
* Capital finance - Interest payments	7.20
<b>** Economic growth **</b>	
* Economic development and regeneration	1.27
* Broadband - rural rollout	0.13
* Planning	2.42
249.52	
*****	
<b>VOUCHER</b>	
*****	
<b>** Other income to supplement council tax **</b>	
* Investment Property income	-2.92
* Car parking	-5.33
* Planning	-2.10
* Capital finance - Interest received	-2.01
* Public Health grant	-7.70
* National Education funding (schools)	-103.24
*****	
<b>TOTAL TO PAY (per month)</b>	<b>£126.22</b>
*****	
MORE INFORMATION AT	
WWW.HEREFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK/COUNCILTAX	
01/04/19	09:00 1234 23 42
*****	

**Last year we worked to:**  
Enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives

500,000



We welcomed over **half a million** visits to our libraries

We supported around **1,600** people to live at home and remain independent for longer



We protected around **2,400** vulnerable adults and **1,000** children and young people



We provided care for **800** older people in nursing homes and residential care homes

## Save time and go online

In March, we're sending out over 85,000 Council Tax bills. This means we will receive lots of calls to our customer service centre. But did you know that most of the reasons for calling can be done online?

### Save yourself time - go online

By registering to access Council Tax online, there's no need to wait for office hours to call. You can access your bill anytime, view your payment history and any due payments, apply

for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction - and all of your paperwork is kept online in one place.

**Got something to tell us?** If you've moved house or have a change in your circumstances that you need to tell us about, that's not a problem. Tell us online and we will do the rest.

### Pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit

If you're not on Direct Debit, now is the time! You can set up your Direct

Debit quickly and securely online and you'll never have to worry about missing a payment again.

[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/myaccount](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/myaccount)



## Help to pay your Council Tax

If you are finding it difficult to pay your Council Tax, you may be entitled to money off your bill, or even pay nothing in certain circumstances.

You may be able to get help to pay your bill through Council Tax Reduction if you are on a low income. We will need to assess your financial situation and other circumstances to see whether you qualify.

### Available discounts

- Single person discount
- Disabled person reduction
- Carer or care worker discount
- Student discount or exemption
- Apprentice discount
- Person aged 18 and eligible for child benefit discount
- Patient in care home or hospital discount or exemption
- Severe mental impairment discount
- Person in detention or prison discount

- Religious community discount
- Care leaver discount

### Hardship payment

If you receive help to pay your Council Tax bill, but are still experiencing financial difficulties, you may be entitled to a hardship payment. Visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltaxhardship](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltaxhardship) for more details.

Find out more online about what your Council Tax pays for, help to plan your budget and which discounts are available: [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/counciltax)



## Last year we worked to: Support the growth of our economy



We checked **550** planning applications to ensure they didn't affect rights of way



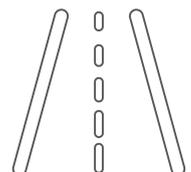
We seized over **111,960** illegal cigarettes and 19.25kg illegal hand rolling tobacco



We awarded **96.9%** of establishments inspected with a food hygiene rating of 3 or better



We completed **446** bridge inspections, an average of 37 every month\*



We resurfaced or dressed **65 miles** of roads (105km)\*

\*with our partner Balfour Beatty Living Places



Herefordshire Council's website provides a number of services you can access from the comfort of your own home, including:

- Manage your Council Tax
- Manage Housing Benefit
- Information on road closures
- Receive the latest news
- Find local events
- Order or renew a library book
- View planning applications
- Sign up for school closure and transport alerts
- View our vacancies
- Advice on social care
- See the latest consultations

- Report a problem including:**
- Missed bin collection
  - Potholes
  - Flytipping
  - Litter problems
  - Faulty street light

Visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk)

## Help to get online

If you are not yet online, or would like to build your confidence in using the internet, there are courses available at libraries across the county. Please call the library to book.



<b>Hereford</b> 01432 383600	<b>Kington</b> 01432 260600	<b>Ledbury</b> 01432 383499	<b>Leominster</b> 01432 383290	<b>Ross</b> 01432 383280
How to use your Smartphone - 25 March, 11am-1pm	How to use your tablet - 19 March, 10am-12noon	How to use your smartphone - 16 April, 4-6pm	How to use your tablet - 21 March, 10am-12noon	Introduction to the internet - 26 March, 5-7pm
Introduction to the internet - 27 May, 11am-1pm	Introduction to the internet - 16 April, 10am-12noon	Introduction to the internet - 21 May, 4-6pm	Introduction to the internet - 23 May, 10am-12noon	Staying safe online - 23 April, 5-7pm
				How to use your tablet - 28 May, 5-7pm

   [hfdscouncil](https://www.facebook.com/hfdscouncil)

[herefordshire.gov.uk](http://herefordshire.gov.uk)

## Last year we worked to:

Secure better services, quality of life and value for money



We carried out **32,194** road repairs including potholes\*



We carried out **2,891** drainage works to reduce road flooding\*



We repaired **839** Signs and bollards\*



We carried out **750** play area inspections\*



We collected **76,234** tonnes of household waste, of which **39.8%** was recycled or composted

\*with our partner Balfour Beatty Living Places

with our partner FCC Environment

# The Great Herefordshire Spring Clean



Litter picking groups across Herefordshire are gearing up for the Great Herefordshire Spring Clean as part of the Great British Spring Clean campaign.

We'd love as many people as possible to get involved - to take part visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/stopthedrop](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/stopthedrop) or email: [stopthedrop@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:stopthedrop@herefordshire.gov.uk) 01432 383150/383449

## Time to bin our assumptions

Innovative research conducted by the council, in partnership with Balfour Beatty Living Places, suggests we need to change our perception of littering.

The council was one of ten organisations nationally to secure funding from the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to undertake an 'innovative research' project.

We wanted to understand how public behaviour is affected by the removal of litter bins in 11 urban, rural and roadside locations and whether or not this has a positive impact on reducing litter incidents.

Initial findings indicate that removing certain bins in some rural and urban areas may actually reduce litter and fly tipping by encouraging people to take responsibility for their waste, take it home and dispose of it.

The findings will be shared with WRAP and DEFRA to help inform any future research or policy development.

All bins removed during the trial have been replaced. It will be for Town and Parish Councils to consider what future action they wish to take to address littering and fly-tipping in their community.

Everybody can help in the fight against litter by making small changes to reduce the waste we all produce when 'out and about' - switching to reusable cups, having a car bin, taking rubbish home and buying items with less disposable packaging are all great ways to make a positive difference.

## Energy saving measures completed

Recently completed energy saving projects are set to provide safer public spaces for residents, help the local environment and save thousands of pounds of taxpayer money.

New LED lighting has recently been installed at both Maylords Orchard car park in Hereford and Unit 3, Thorn Business Park in Rotherwas.

The bright uniform LED lighting reduces shadows, providing car drivers with more lighting improving visibility and helping users to feel safer.

In addition to providing better lighting, as the LEDs are much more efficient than conventional lighting they will also deliver both cost and carbon savings which will help to reduce running costs and reduce carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), a greenhouse gas, which contributes to global warming.

The new lighting systems are expected to save a combined 135,000 kWh of energy per year and will result in an overall carbon reduction of nearly 50 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually.

A new solar panel array has also been installed at Kingsland Depot, Street Lane, Kingsland. The installation is expected to generate roughly 15,000kWh of energy per year, and help to reduce annual carbon emissions by 8.4 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

The three projects are part of the council's effort to reduce our carbon footprint by 40% by 2020, and will help to save the local taxpayer almost £20,000 every year.

For more information on how Herefordshire Council is tackling litter, visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/stopthedrop](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/stopthedrop)

# Return unwanted medical equipment for reuse



Herefordshire Council and Wye Valley NHS Trust have launched a 'Hand it Back' campaign to encourage residents to return unwanted medical equipment so it can be used by other people.

The 'Hand it Back' campaign was created because there are millions of pounds worth of equipment on loan in the community, some of which may no longer be needed or used.

Returning unwanted equipment is really easy. If you, or a relative or friend, has equipment supplied by Herefordshire Council or the NHS (via NRS Healthcare) that they no longer need, simply give it a clean first and then choose one of the following options for a free return:

- Call NRS Healthcare on 0300 100 0045 to arrange a collection.
- Email NRS Healthcare at enquiries@herefordshire.nrs-uk.net to arrange collection
- Alternatively, return the item directly to the NRS Healthcare depot at Unit 3a, Thorn Business Park, Rotherwas, Hereford, HR2 6JT. The depot is open Monday - Friday, 9am-5pm

The free collection service does not apply to walking aids. These items can be returned to the physiotherapy department at any hospital in the county or taken to NRS Healthcare at Rotherwas.

# Affordable rented housing is changing

From June this year the way people apply for affordable housing is changing. People will be able to apply to Herefordshire Council and also directly to housing associations with properties in the county.

These changes will give customers a better experience of applying for housing and more choice over the types of housing they can apply for. At the same time the council will be introducing a new allocation policy which will be used to assess housing need for people applying to the council's housing register.

The current system will remain in place until the new online service is launched.

Look out for more information about the changes over the next few months on [www.herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk) and social media @hfdscouncil

# Bringing faster Broadband to the county

Each month, more homes and business across the county are benefitting from faster broadband thanks to Herefordshire Council's Fastershire broadband project.

87% of properties in Herefordshire can order a superfast broadband service, and through a new contract Gigaclear is bringing ultrafast broadband at some of the fastest speeds in the country.

In Hereford city, Fastershire's contract with BT is delivering an additional 2,200 homes and businesses with superfast fibre broadband.

In addition, Fastershire's contract with Airband aims to provide faster

broadband access to 10 dispersed clusters of premises spread across the county.

To find out if your property can access faster broadband visit [www.fastershire.com](http://www.fastershire.com).

Any businesses that still require access to superfast broadband and are not included in the project's main rollouts can apply for business broadband grant, visit, [www.fastershire.com/business-broadband-grant](http://www.fastershire.com/business-broadband-grant).

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## Tour de force



Cycling is on the up throughout Herefordshire thanks to the growing popularity of group cycling.

There are Cycle Club rides taking place across the county catering for all abilities and interests, ranging from starter and family rides, off-road and mountain routes, women-only rides, charity rides, to a range of more taxing routes for more competitive cyclists.

Many rides include stops for coffee and cake and even breakfast.

To see the full range of fantastic cycle clubs and rides across Herefordshire please visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/led-rides](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/led-rides)



## Waste collection changes

From March, the way your waste is collected may be changing. We will write to you directly if there are changes to the day of your collection but collection times could change for many more people.

### Why is my waste collection changing?

Our crews have been looking to make their collection routes more efficient, and to prevent missed collections. Collection areas have been grouped together to ensure that all the waste in that area is collected on one day, rather than over several days.

In the long term, this will mean that we reduce vehicle emissions and save fuel, have more flexibility to cope with seasonal changes in the amounts of waste being collected, but also that we have more capacity to allow for future housing developments.

### What do I need to do?

Always make sure your bin is out by 6.30am on your collection day, or the evening before. If your collection day is changing, then we will write to you so look out for notification in the post.

Check your bin collection day online, or check which items can be recycled, at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/bincollection](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/bincollection)



## Funding secured for first time central heating systems

300 households in rural and urban areas of Herefordshire and Shropshire will soon be able to benefit from the National Grid Warm Homes Fund to install efficient affordable heating.

Led by Herefordshire Council, Keep Herefordshire Warm and Keep Shropshire Warm has successfully bid for over £1m to fund the installation of affordable central heating systems for households in fuel poverty.

Fuel poverty remains a significant issue in Herefordshire, with an estimated 11,043 households thought to be still affected.

Many people are unaware of the risks that living in a cold home present to their health. The risk of a stroke or heart attack rises, and other conditions such as colds and flu can become more likely. Just putting on another jumper or relying on one heater isn't enough for many people.

In order to qualify for support through the project, householders will need to be in a privately owned or rented property, without a recognised central heating system, typically be low income and either be in receipt of certain qualifying benefits and/or vulnerable.

If you feel that you may qualify then please contact our friendly advisors at Keep Herefordshire Warm on 0800 677 1432 or email [khw@mea.org.uk](mailto:khw@mea.org.uk).



# Providing shelter through the winter months



A team of wardens and volunteers worked throughout the winter months to provide a shelter for the county's homeless at St Peter's church hall.

Located in St Peter's Square, Hereford, the night shelter opened

November - March providing a safe alternative to sleeping on the streets.

In addition to a warm welcome the team at the shelter also provided hot drinks and access to clean dry clothing, showers and washing machines.

If you need to speak to someone about a housing problem contact Herefordshire Council on 01432 261600 or email [housing.enquiry@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:housing.enquiry@herefordshire.gov.uk) Visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/Homeless](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/Homeless)



# Young people take on city redesign challenge



12 care leavers from across the county took on the roles of local government officers as part of a Council Takeover Day.

In a simulation workshop the attendees used their skills in problem solving, team working and communications to redesign Hereford city centre. The young people also created their own version of Herefordshire Now magazine with a focus on youth. At the end of the workshop the attendees took part in group presentations to talk about their projects.

The event was organised by Herefordshire Council to give the young people a valuable insight into the various roles in public services and provide them with the opportunity to experience what it feels like to work for an organisation.

Their ideas will be used to create an image of how they would like the city to look in the future to appeal to the younger members of the local community.

# Ofsted review - significant improvements

A recent Ofsted review has found that Herefordshire Council is heading in the right direction to improve its children's services.

Ofsted is the national body that inspects and regulates services which care for children and young people across England.

The planned visit on 22 and 23 January 2019, was a follow up to a routine inspection that took place in June 2018.

Ofsted's feedback following the most recent visit highlighted that there has been significant positive improvements to the areas of the council's children's services that they reviewed.

Keeping Herefordshire's children and young people safe and giving them a great start in life is the council's highest priority.

The council recognises that there is still more to do to improve and has recently invested £1.6m in the services to enable good social work to flourish, so that the county's children and young people receive a consistently good safeguarding service.