

# HN

## HEREFORDSHIRE NOW

The residents' magazine from Herefordshire Council

October 2025

FREE AND ONLINE

### Beefy museum donation

£10 million investment brings new school to life | 4

£50 Million Investment in Herefordshire's Roads | 5

Museums & Galleries what's on | 13

 Herefordshire  
Council

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# Stay Connected with Herefordshire Council - Now on WhatsApp!

Herefordshire Council has launched a brand-new WhatsApp Channel to keep residents informed with the latest news, updates and emergency alerts - straight to your phone.

Whether you're a long-time resident or new to the county, following the Council's WhatsApp Channel is a simple way to stay informed and connected - anonymously and effortlessly.



## What is a WhatsApp Channel?

A WhatsApp Channel is a one-way broadcast tool that lets organisations share updates with followers. Unlike group chats, followers don't reply or interact - they simply receive timely, relevant information. Best of all, your identity remains private: no one can see who follows the channel, not even the Council.

## Why Follow?

By joining the Council's WhatsApp Channel, you'll get:

- News about local services and events
- Alerts on consultations and opportunities to have your say
- Real-time updates during emergencies, such as flooding

## How to Join It's quick and easy:

- Open your WhatsApp app
- Scan the QR code below
- Tap "Follow" on the Herefordshire Council Channel
- Don't forget to tap the bell icon to turn on notifications.

# Flipping great donation from the Beefy Boys

The Beefy Boys recently came to the History Store, Hereford to donate items from their successes at the international burger awards.

These included a spatula and original Beefy Boys hat worn during the team's breakthrough at the 2014 World Burger Championships in Las Vegas, where they took an impressive second place. Also, a medal from their 2024 return to the global stage in Indianapolis, where they placed fourth.

Herefordshire Museums & Galleries approached The Beefy Boys earlier this year, asking if they would be willing to donate an important artifact from their story to be part of the new museum collection. The team were honoured to be asked and proud to have their achievements recognised as part of Herefordshire's rich cultural heritage.

The items will be included in a new exhibit celebrating the region's contemporary culture and local

success stories. With a decade of flipping burgers, representing Hereford on the world stage, and building a loyal fan base, The Beefy Boys are now firmly embedded in the county's culinary history.

They'll be on show once the museum reopens following its major redevelopment. Keep an eye out for the spatula that made it to Vegas, the hat that witnessed it all, and the medal that proves lightning can strike twice.

You can get in touch via [herefordshirenow@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:herefordshirenow@herefordshire.gov.uk) to tell us what services you'd like to find out more about. To view this magazine online or sign up to receive future editions in your inbox, visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/council/herefordshire-now](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/council/herefordshire-now)  
All details correct at time of print.

Follow us:

      [hfdscouncil](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/council/herefordshire-now)



# Welcome

Summer is coming to an end and we've been blessed with some warm and dry days to enjoy our fantastic county and some great local events.

The Ledbury Poetry Festival is always a highlight, and it was good to welcome the Three Choirs Festival for its turn back in the county and to see Herefordshire featured at this year's Three Counties Show.

There were also many fantastic community-led events on offer, such as those organised as part of this year's Walk this May Festival and Refugee Awareness Week. These events are really important for bringing communities together around common interests.

In July, Ofsted recognised major improvements in our children's services, especially for those in care. This coincided with

Tina Russell's appointment as permanent Corporate Director.

We've also made some great strides forward in our key infrastructure programme. In July the Cabinet agreed the next step in the delivery of the first phase of the Hereford bypass.

We are progressing our plans to create a fantastic new library and learning centre in a restored Shire Hall, bringing it back to its former glory. There's also the major consultation exercise we've just completed that will help us to shape the future of Merton Meadow. You can read about some of these developments in the following pages.

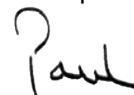
As schools gear up for another academic year, please have a read of our articles on why good attendance matters (page 4) and how you can protect your children by ensuring their vaccinations



are up to date (below). We also highlight some of the services available to children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities (page 9).

Finally, please take a look at the activities coming up at Herefordshire Museums & Galleries, including details of Museum on the Move – our new electric van that will be travelling to schools, festivals, towns and villages in the coming months (page 13).

So, why not grab a cuppa, put your feet up and have a read.



Paul Walker, Chief Executive, Herefordshire Council

## Keeping children safe & healthy



Katie Spence, Regional Deputy Director for UK Health Security Agency West Midlands, shares top tips for keeping children safe and healthy as they return to the classroom:

**Check immunisations are up to date** – it's important to catch up on the MMR vaccine which protects against measles, mumps and rubella, and any other missed vaccinations by checking children's Red Books, the NHS app or contacting their GP surgery. Teenagers should also catch up on any missed MenACWY vaccines, which protect against 4 types of bacteria causing meningitis and septicaemia, as well as the HPV vaccine, to fight the human papilloma virus that can lead to several types of cancer, including cervical cancer.

**Prevent bugs with good hygiene practice** by teaching children to wash their hands regularly in soap and warm water, especially after the toilet and before eating.

Getting them to catch coughs, sneezes and blow their noses in tissues to throw away, then

wash hands, will also help reduce respiratory infections. Singing Happy Birthday twice should cover the recommended 20 seconds to wash hands effectively.

**Knowing when to stay home helps keep others well** – children can go back to school with a runny nose, sore throat or slight cough if otherwise well, but keep them off school if they have a high temperature. Anyone with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay at home until symptom free for 48 hours. If you suspect measles, keep them at home and contact your GP or 111 out of hours - don't just turn up to a healthcare provider, as it's very infectious.

For more information about childhood illnesses and vaccines, please visit the NHS website [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

# £10 million investment brings new school to life

In a transformative move for education in Herefordshire's Golden Valley, Peterchurch Primary School is set to receive a brand-new building thanks to a substantial £10 million investment from the council.

The new school will be built on the existing site and is designed to accommodate a growing number of pupils, increasing capacity from 105 to 140 students. This expansion reflects the village's evolving needs and the council's commitment to providing high-quality education in rural communities.

The development will also include a dedicated 'nurture hub', tailored to support children with special educational needs and



disabilities. This space will offer a safe, inclusive environment where every child can thrive, reinforcing the school's ethos of care and community.

Following a competitive tender process, Tilbury Douglas Construction has been awarded the contract to bring the project to life, moving it from the design phase into full construction.

With work set to begin soon, the new facilities are expected to open their doors in autumn 2026.

This investment marks a significant milestone for Peterchurch and its surrounding areas, promising not just a new building, but a renewed sense of opportunity and growth for future generations.

## Good attendance matters!

### The Power of Showing Up: Why Attendance Matters

Families across Herefordshire are supporting their child's return to school for the new academic year. For children and young people, this transition can be exciting and challenging. One thing is clear—good attendance from day one makes a big difference.

Regular school attendance is about more than just being present. It helps children:

- Build confidence in new routines
- Form strong relationships with teachers and classmates
- Feel safe and supported in their learning environment
- Stay on track academically and emotionally

Missing even one day early in the term can increase the risk of persistent absence. Regular attendance builds confidence and keeps children on track.

### The Hidden Cost of Absence

Each missed school day could cost a child up to £750 in future earnings. Over time, absences affect academic performance and future job opportunities.

### Working Together for Success

Parents and carers play a vital role in helping children adjust.

Keep communication open with teachers and encourage a positive attitude toward school.

Tips for a smooth start

- Establish routines early—consistent bedtimes and morning habits ease the transition
- Show your child that school attendance matters
- Talk about the positives—new friends, learning, adventures
- Help your child prepare for school the night before
- Inform the school about illness and expected return dates



- Attend parent evenings to discuss progress
- Reach out for support—staff are there to help

### Make This Year Count

Every day in school is a step toward a brighter future. Let's work together to help children start strong, adjust to new routines, and feel confident.

For more tips, visit:

[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/school-attendance-absences](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/school-attendance-absences)

Need help? Contact the Children's Help and Advice Team: 01432 260261 (Mon–Fri, 9am–4.45pm)



# £50 Million Investment in Herefordshire's Roads

Herefordshire's roads are getting a major upgrade and it's good news for everyone who lives, works, and travels in the county. Whether you're a parent on the school run, a tradesperson heading to a job, or a business owner relying on deliveries, the council's £50 million investment is designed to make your journey safer, smoother and more reliable.

This year's significant investment has helped to improve the county's road network with:

- 75 km (47 miles) of resurfaced roads
- 100 km (62 miles) of surface dressing works to prevent potholes
- 8 highway structures repaired
- 2 schemes delivered to protect roads from landslips and river erosion
- 50 safety barriers upgraded

- 8 km (5 miles) of footpaths and cycleways resurfaced
- 100 small drainage schemes to keep roads dry and safe
- 25,000 potholes repaired

These improvements help protect all road users, from schoolchildren and cyclists to delivery drivers and emergency services.

For residents, this investment means fewer delays, safer travel, and less wear and tear on vehicles. For businesses, it means more reliable transport routes, smoother logistics, and better access to customers and suppliers.

Healthcare workers, tradespeople, and delivery drivers will all benefit from improved access, especially in rural areas where road conditions can be challenging.



This isn't just about fixing problems - it's about preventing them. The council is shifting towards a preventative approach to road maintenance, reducing the need for emergency pothole repairs and ensuring long-term improvements.

Herefordshire's roads are the lifeblood of our communities and economy. This investment is a commitment to keeping the county connected, competitive, and safe for today and tomorrow.

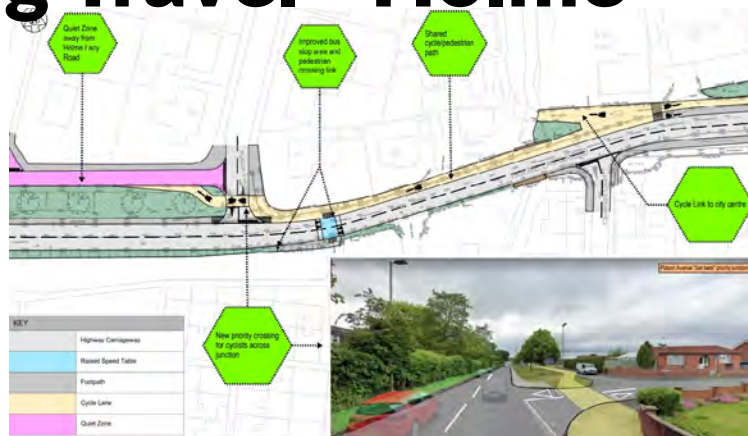
## Transforming Travel - Holme Lacy Road

A transformative new scheme to improve travel in Hereford is set to begin, enhancing connectivity, safety and accessibility for all road users—whether driving, cycling or walking. The Holme Lacy Road Scheme will also support local businesses and improve overall quality of life in the area. Herefordshire Council has appointed Cambrensis Civil Engineering Ltd as the contractor to deliver the project, which forms part of a wider programme of infrastructure improvements across the county.

Stretching from Oak Crescent to the Thorn Business Park junction, the Holme Lacy Road Scheme will deliver a comprehensive package of improvements, including:

- Resurfaced carriageways for a smoother drive

- Safer crossing points for pedestrians
- Raised tables and high friction surfacing to reduce vehicle speeds
- Widened shared spaces for cyclists and walkers
- A new signalised junction at Holme Lacy Road/Chestnut Drive/Hoarwithy Road
- A shuttle working system at the Holme Lacy railway bridge to better manage traffic flow and allow for a wider footway for pedestrians and cyclists



These upgrades will not only improve safety and accessibility but also complement the first phase of the Western Bypass, easing congestion and enhancing access to Rotherwas, a key employment hub in Hereford.

The scheme is part of a £19 million investment of government Levelling Up Funding for a package of transport and travel measures in and around Hereford city.

# Hereford's New Transport Hub

The council's 'year of delivery' began with the launch of a new transport hub to improve travel options.

Enhancing the front of Hereford's historic railway station, the development will support multiple modes of getting around and create an exciting urban space that ties together local heritage, public and private transport and active travel. The hub will feature:

- New bus stands and layovers
- Taxi and car parking areas (including commuter and short-term parking)
- Covered cycle storage and lockers
- Indoor welfare facilities for passengers

Cllr Philip Price, Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure, said:

"The Transport Hub has been planned for a very long time; it is a big project and will bring lots of benefits to all users, whether they are on foot, cycling, driving



*Herefordshire Cabinet Members and senior officers celebrate ground breaking at the Transport Hub. (L-R) Cllr Ellissa Swinglehurst (Deputy Leader), Cllr Philip Price (Transport & Infrastructure), Paul Walker (Chief Executive) and Scott Tompkins (Director, Infrastructure)*

or on public transport. Once completed, the hub will not only offer accessible, safe and better transport connections, it will help open up better access to Hereford's cultural, retail and family-friendly offerings, and is expected to play a key role in supporting the county's economic growth.

"This initiative is one of many being delivered by Herefordshire

Council and our partners over the next 18 months, which together will be a significant step-forward in transforming infrastructure, public services and economic opportunities for both urban and rural areas across the county."

For updates on the Hereford Transport Hub project, visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/hereford-transport-hub](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/hereford-transport-hub)

## Backing the bypass: Phase One Gets Green Lit

Herefordshire Council's Cabinet has taken a decisive step toward transforming the county's transport infrastructure, approving the next phase in the delivery of the Hereford bypass. This major project promises to unlock new opportunities for housing, employment, and environmental improvement across the region.

Cabinet members endorsed the procurement route for construction and authorised the acquisition of land needed to deliver phase one of the bypass—formerly known as the Southern Link Road. This new road will connect the A49 to the A465, easing congestion and paving the way for future development.

The bypass forms part of the wider Western Growth Corridor, a long-term vision to support sustainable development and improve quality of life for residents. If fully realised, the corridor will deliver:

**Improved transport resilience:** A new bridge over the River Wye will reduce reliance on Greyfriars Bridge and the A49, improving journey times and network reliability.

**Healthier communities:** Lower traffic volumes will create more travel choice, including more space for walking, cycling, and public realm improvements in the city.

**Cleaner air and better public spaces:** Reduced congestion will

enhance air quality and make Hereford a more attractive place to live and visit.

**Economic and housing growth:** The bypass will help unlock acres of employment and housing land, helping to boost access to jobs, education and services.

Phase one of the bypass will also help alleviate pressure on key routes such as Belmont Road and Holme Lacy Road, supporting the development of employment land south of the river and improving connectivity across the county. This milestone marks a significant move toward delivering the infrastructure needed to support Herefordshire's future— one that balances growth, sustainability, and community wellbeing.



# A message from the Leader of the council



Herefordshire Council has now begun its long year of delivery: an ambitious 18-month multi-million pound investment programme in infrastructure, transport and economic development that will bring lasting benefits to families, workers, businesses and communities across the whole county.

**The Hereford Bypass**, will ease congestion and unlock land for housing and jobs, supporting growth across the county. Work on the first phase of the long-awaited bypass is set to begin by the end of 2026.

Transport improvements are central to our plans. The new **Hereford Transport Hub** will integrate key travel links, making it easier to get around by train, bus, car, bike, taxi or on foot. This forms part of a wider Local Transport Plan shaped by public input, with strong support for better bus services, active travel options and the bypass itself.

Road safety and maintenance are also being prioritised, with millions of pounds allocated this year to improve our highways in every corner of Herefordshire. For example, over the Summer we've

been surface dressing 58 miles of road - that's the distance between Hereford and Birmingham - to help keep you, your families and businesses running. I know there is still a long way to go but I am confident this investment will lead to smoother and safer journeys with far fewer potholes for road users.

Local economic growth is being nurtured through big initiatives like the **Ross Enterprise Park**, offering huge opportunities for start-ups and investors; a business-friendly mindset to support existing firms develop and grow, and real investment in education, skills and all-age opportunities to create more and higher-paid jobs and career pathways.

As part of our investment in culture, arts and preserving our rich heritage we are renovating the **Shire Hall**, not only bringing it back to its former glory, but turning it into a vibrant community space with a new library and learning space. We are set to restore the county's **museum and art gallery (HMAG)** transforming it into an outstanding space that tells the

amazing story of our county and the people who made it.

Our outdoor spaces are set for transformation through a major new public realm contract focused on making streets, parks and communal areas cleaner, greener and more accessible - particularly for families, older residents and those with disabilities. Environmental resilience is another cornerstone of the programme, with efforts to rewild spaces, turning city scrubland into beautiful wetland; improving water quality and river health, and ensuring new developments support biodiversity and sustainability.

The Council I am honoured to lead is committed to growth that is inclusive, ensuring that every part of the county and those in them benefit from these investments.

This is why we will work with our community and voluntary groups, town and parish councils and local businesses to shape the investments so we can build a future that works for everyone - now and for generations to come.



[www.elecreg.co.uk/hfds](http://www.elecreg.co.uk/hfds)



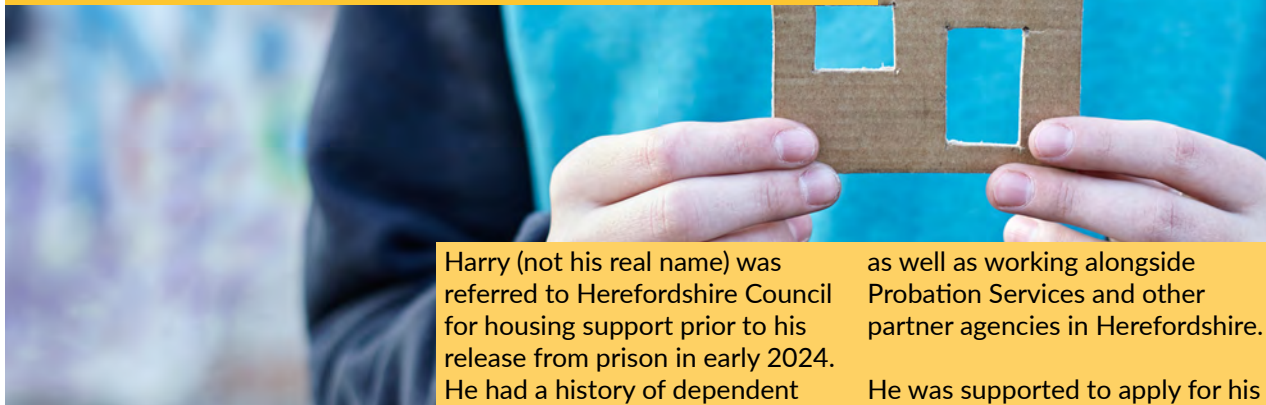
## Are your household details up to date on the electoral register?

Your local Electoral Services office will contact you by text message, email or letter.

Please follow any instructions carefully and take the necessary action. If you have been asked to respond or your household information has changed, please take note of your security codes and submit your response via [www.elecreg.co.uk/hfds](http://www.elecreg.co.uk/hfds)

**Contact the Herefordshire Electoral Services office if you need further advice:**  
**Email:** [canvass@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:canvass@herefordshire.gov.uk) **Phone:** 01432 260107

# Housing Solutions to prevent homelessness



One of our most basic needs is to have a place that we can call home. Somewhere where we can be protected from the weather, somewhere to feel safe and secure and to be with the ones we love.

Many people face housing challenges—from poor conditions to risk of eviction. Our Housing Solutions Team is here to help.

Herefordshire Council's Housing Solutions Team is here to support anyone who is homeless or at risk of being homeless. We can work with you to assess your current situation, including:

- Giving you advice on your housing rights
- Providing information on any welfare support you can get, including housing benefits
- Negotiating with your landlord or friends and family to help you stay in your accommodation
- Helping you understand your housing options and to secure accommodation that meets your needs

The team works closely with a wide range of partners, including GP surgeries, schools, community and voluntary organisations, so that they can spot the signs and take steps to prevent homelessness before it's too late.

In addition, our outreach team is out and about every day checking on those who are rough sleeping in Hereford city or the market towns, offering shelter and support.

Harry (not his real name) was referred to Herefordshire Council for housing support prior to his release from prison in early 2024. He had a history of dependent drinking and violence when intoxicated.

When his case was assessed by the statutory housing service it was deemed that Harry did not meet the threshold for 'Priority Need' and therefore no offer of accommodation was made.

Harry was offered a vacant pod – a small self-contained unit of accommodation for people who are not owed a statutory duty for accommodation. These run alongside our winter night shelter to provide a warm and safe place for people to sleep who would otherwise be sleeping rough.

Through the support he was offered whilst in the pod, Harry was supported to move into Whitecross Road Hub – a supported accommodation service that's delivered in partnership between Herefordshire Council and Citizen Housing.

Within nine months, Harry engaged with the support that was offered around his alcohol consumption and employability,

as well as working alongside Probation Services and other partner agencies in Herefordshire.

He was supported to apply for his own property and tenancy and has now been residing in his own flat for two months. He is on the verge of finishing his probation and is working full time, on a permanent contract.

Harry says:

"When I came out of custody, I didn't know where I would be sleeping and couldn't see any hope for my future. The support that I received ... has been amazing and I genuinely don't know where I would be without the support that I've had from Herefordshire Council and Citizen Housing. My future is now looking bright and I'm very grateful for all the help that I've received."

If you are homeless or at risk of homelessness, call the team on 01432 261600 (Monday-Friday from 10am-4pm) or email [housing.enquiry@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:housing.enquiry@herefordshire.gov.uk). If you are worried about someone who is sleeping rough, or you need help yourself, visit Streetlink: <https://thestreetlink.org.uk>.

## Are you interested in education and want to give something back to the community?

Become an Independent School Admissions Appeal Panel member. No formal qualifications are required and full training is provided.

For an informal conversation about the role call 01432 260380 or email [Schoolappeals@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Schoolappeals@herefordshire.gov.uk) or visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/school-admissions-panels](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schools-education/school-admissions-panels)





# Free support for SEND families

Herefordshire families can access an online directory that provides information on a wide variety of free local and national support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This service is known as the 'Local Offer'.

The 'Local Offer' provides parents and carers with information about education, health and social care services (from birth to 25 years of age), eligibility criteria to access specialist support services, support arrangements, health and wellbeing services, leisure activities and support groups, neurodivergence support, and how to request an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment.

Some of the information has been co-produced with parents and carers of children and young people with SEND to ensure the information is helpful to families.

A Herefordshire mum remembers how the support her family received during her journey with her daughter made a real difference to their lives.

"We moved to Hereford when our daughter was almost two and it was clear to us that she had delayed development, but at that stage we were not sure of the cause.

"We were overwhelmed, but local services gave us vital emotional and practical support during our daughter's early diagnosis.

"Our daughter has additional needs that needed to be supported, so having someone to advise us on the type of help we could access meant that we could keep her in a mainstream nursery when she was younger. This was so valuable to us as it allowed us to keep working and our daughter loved going to nursery to see her friends and the staff. Her graduation from nursery was a precious experience for our family and will be one of our most treasured memories.



Photo © Ali Kulakowski

"I don't think we were prepared for how emotionally draining the process was going to be to prepare an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), but having support at that time made the daunting process that little bit easier. I would say it's crucial for any family to have someone they can access to provide practical and emotional support with the first EHCP. I now realise that having such a comprehensive plan for our daughter's care has been worth all the effort in the long run because it ensures our daughter's needs are addressed and catered for.

"I look back in amazement at everything that has been done to help our daughter, and we are really grateful for all of the support that we have received as a family. I would encourage any families of children with additional needs to access the variety of free support available

through Herefordshire's Local Offer."

To find out more about the Herefordshire's 'Local Offer' visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/localoffer)

If you need help to find specific information, please email our team for support [localoffer@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:localoffer@herefordshire.gov.uk)

**SENDIASS • Supporting Herefordshire Families**

**Information, Advice and Support Service  
Herefordshire & Worcestershire**

**Do you have a child/young person with a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND)?**

**Do you think your child might have Special Educational Needs (SEN)?**

**SENDIASS provides FREE, impartial & confidential information, advice and support on all matters relating to children and young people (0-25) who have or may have SEND**

**We can help you if...**

- You have concerns about your child's progress at their education setting
- You would like to know more about the support available for children with SEND and their families
- You would like to know more about Herefordshire's and Worcestershire's SEND policies and procedures
- You need information and guidance on the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process

**Call:** 01432 260955  
(24hr answerphone service available)

**Contact us:** Monday - Friday  
8:30am - 4pm

**Email:** [SENDIASS@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:SENDIASS@herefordshire.gov.uk)

**Information, Advice and Support Service  
Herefordshire & Worcestershire**



[www.hwsendiass.co.uk](http://www.hwsendiass.co.uk)

**Herefordshire Council**

**worcestershire county council**

# Supporting working families

Imagine being able to go to school early, have breakfast with friends, play games, and then stay after school for fun activities until your parents finish work. That's exactly what wraparound childcare offers and it's changing lives for families across Herefordshire.

As part of a big plan announced in the Spring Budget 2023, the UK government wants every family with primary school-aged children to have access to childcare from 8.00am to 5.30pm during term time by 2026. It's called the National Wraparound Childcare Programme, and Herefordshire is already making great progress for working parents and carers.

## What's Happening in Herefordshire?

The council's Wraparound Team has been working with schools, childminders, and childcare providers to make sure families get the support they need. By asking parents to complete a survey they have been able to identify which areas need more childcare options.

One local mum shared how wraparound care has helped her family: "My daughter uses wraparound care every day so my husband and I can go to work. The additional hours of childcare makes family life easier, more convenient and gives us more flexibility.



My daughter enjoys the food on offer and playing with all the different toys!"

## Why it matters

Wraparound childcare isn't about convenience - it helps parents keep their jobs and gives children a safe and fun place to thrive. Whether it's breakfast clubs, after-school games, or creative activities, it's all about making life better for families.

## Want to learn more about wraparound childcare?

If you live in Herefordshire and want to know more, check out the council's website:

[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/family-support/childcare/2](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/family-support/childcare/2)

Or email the council's Wraparound Team directly [wraparound@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:wraparound@herefordshire.gov.uk)

# Herefordshire helps refugees

Herefordshire has a proud tradition of welcoming refugees, including recent arrivals from Ukraine, Syria and Hong Kong. One recent arrival has been Valeriia from Ukraine. Valeriia, who is bedbound, and her carer Alla arrived in February 2024 via the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Sponsored by a local couple, they were offered six months' accommodation. Before arrival, the council assessed the home

and arranged mobility aids with help from Adult Social Care and Occupational Therapy. Once in Herefordshire, Valeriia and Alla were registered with local services, and Alla received carer support, including respite care.

When the sponsor's home proved unsuitable long-term, Housing Services helped them secure a ground floor flat in December 2024. Now settled, Valeriia is stable and supported, while Alla

has more independence—taking English lessons, integrating into society and accessing local amenities.

If you have any queries regarding refugee support, please email the team at [refugeesupport@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:refugeesupport@herefordshire.gov.uk) or [supportforukraine@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:supportforukraine@herefordshire.gov.uk).



# Celebrating shared lives



## A special event was held in June to celebrate and recognise the work undertaken by Herefordshire's Shared Lives carers.

Shared Lives offers support for adults with a wide range of needs to live or stay safely in a welcoming home environment. We were delighted that more than 40 Shared Lives carers and the people they support attended the event, held at Hereford Rowing Club.

The occasion coincided with National Shared Lives Week, an annual celebration of shared lives across the UK (#WeAreSharedLives). It was also used to launch a series of new videos that showcase what Shared Lives is all about for the carer and the individual(s) they support.

In the video you can hear from ...

Rachel who enjoys supporting and empowering H to make her own decisions and experience life to the full. She says: "Whoever you are, there's somebody who will fit into your household really well – and there are benefits to them and to you."

Ness who has supported Jamie since the age of 11 (through Fostering Services) and continued as his Shared Lives carer. Jamie is included as an equal member of the family and Ness encourages him to develop his skills and potential and to thrive in the local community. She says: "I have no

regrets about joining Shared Lives and would recommend it 100% to anybody else."

Maurice and Simone who currently support Paul and Melvyn in their home full-time. Simone used to work in residential care but feels Shared Lives gives the guys more choices and scope to do what they want. "Family life is better," she says, "It's just a happy house..... to me they are my family."

And Sheila who's been with Shared Lives for six years, progressing from short breaks to caring for Conor full time in her home with the help of her daughter. "I get as much out of it as I give," she says, "He enhances my life tremendously."

"If you're a caring person and you want something special out of life, then go for it," she adds.

You can view the videos on YouTube.

For more information on Shared Lives and how you can open your heart and home to someone who needs support, please visit our website, call 01432 260798 or email [sharedlives@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sharedlives@herefordshire.gov.uk).

# Keep warm this winter

Does your home lose heat quickly or is it difficult to keep warm? Are your energy bills going through the roof?

Then you may be interested in the Warm Homes Local Grants now available to Herefordshire residents and funded by the UK Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

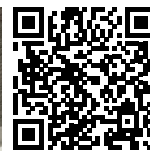
The grants are to support lower-income households in Herefordshire to reduce fuel bills and cut carbon emissions. Their aim is to raise the energy efficiency of the home and help households that are most vulnerable to rising energy costs.

A 'whole house' approach is taken. This means that the grant scheme will check to see if your home has appropriate windows, doors and insulation before looking at heating systems. Full funding is available to eligible householders to support energy saving improvements, such as loft and wall insulation, first-time double glazing and doors, solar panels and environmentally friendly heating.

Every home is unique and some lose heat quickly, making it harder to stay warm in the cold months. By installing energy saving improvements such as these, your home will not lose as much heat through windows, doors, roof and walls. Your home will warm up more quickly and stay warm for longer. You will therefore reduce the amount of energy you use.

Expressions of interest for the Warm Homes Local Grants are invited. Full details are on our website: [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/warmhomes](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/warmhomes). Alternatively, email our team at [warmhomeslocalgrant@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:warmhomeslocalgrant@herefordshire.gov.uk) or call 01432 260401.

# Tobacco control - working together with partners



Back in April, Herefordshire Tobacco Control Alliance launched the county's first five-year plan for tobacco control and stopping smoking.

One of the four areas identified for targeted action in the plan is 'Effective Enforcement'. This is all about making sure laws around the sale of tobacco and vapes are followed.

The council's Trading Standards service is at the heart of this work. Officers support local retailers to avoid illegal sales. They seize unlawful products and are key to successful prosecutions, when breaches arise. For example, for the period April to June 2025, they seized 785 packs of cigarettes (15,900 cigarettes) and 13.5 kg of hand rolling tobacco.

The team is keen to ensure members of the public understand the links between the supply of illegal tobacco and other organised crime. In fact, we have had a local example of this with one Herefordshire-based shopkeeper being arrested, deported to France and later imprisoned for human trafficking.



You may know that single use vapes were banned by UK Government from June this year. Although the aim of this law was mainly to reduce the environmental damage caused by these disposables, it is hoped that it will also put off young people from taking up vaping as a lifestyle choice. Our Trading Standards Officers are visiting all known vape shops in the county to check that they are sticking to the new law. In the period from 10 June to 8 July 2025, they seized 925 illegal devices.

They also take action to ensure vapes are not sold to underage children. Establishments found to be breaking the law are issued with closure notices, as has happened recently to several stores in Hereford and Leominster.

If you are concerned about the sale of tobacco or vapes in the county, including sales to children, please report the matter to our Trading Standards team on

01432 261761 or [ethelpline@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ethelpline@herefordshire.gov.uk).

The new Tobacco Control Plan also outlines how it will work to prevent people (especially children and young people) from taking up smoking in the first place; how it will help smokers to quit the habit; and how it will provide targeted support to those who are most likely to smoke.

Visit [www.herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk) and search Herefordshire Tobacco Control Plan to read the full plan.

For free expert support to help you stop smoking, please visit our Talk Community website ([www.talkcommunity.co.uk](http://www.talkcommunity.co.uk)) or call 01432 383567.

Herefordshire Tobacco Control Alliance is made up of representatives from interested organisations including the council, Healthwatch Herefordshire, the NHS, Police, Fire and Rescue, and pharmacy representatives.

## Citymapper: the new official journey planning app!



Herefordshire Council has partnered with Citymapper, the UK's leading journey planning app, now the official transport app for the county. Whether commuting into Hereford, heading to college, or planning a day out, you can now use Citymapper. The app combines live bus locations, real-time updates, and county-wide transport options in one place.

Citymapper includes Stagecoach, Sargeants Brothers, Yeomans Travel, National Express, and

National Rail services. For cyclists, it factors in Beryl bikes or your own bike.

And it's not just for Herefordshire. The app also works across the Midlands, London and the North of England.

### Track your bus on the map

The real-time bus tracker, rolling out soon, shows arrival times and lets passengers follow buses live. It even factors in traffic delays for greater accuracy.

Features to make journeys easier:

- 'Leave later' options
- Step-by-step directions.
- Multi-modal trips linking bus and rail and smarter
- greener travel

The app supports the Council's commitment to modernising transport and encouraging sustainable travel. Real-time data and integrated journey planning make public and active travel easier to choose.



# Get involved with Herefordshire Museums & Galleries this autumn!

Hereford's Broad Street Museum and Art Gallery may be closed for major redevelopment, but there are still plenty of ways to get involved. From pop-up exhibitions to creative workshops and community events, there's lots to enjoy this autumn.

Thanks to funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Museum on the Move van is launching in September, bringing the museum experience directly to communities across Herefordshire.

Look out for our vibrant new electric van, which will be travelling to schools, festivals, towns and villages to deliver pop-up displays, real museum objects and hands-on activities for all ages. You can find out where it's going by following Herefordshire Museums & Galleries on Facebook and Instagram or by visiting Herefordshire Council's Events webpage [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/events](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/events).

There are also some great events coming up at the Old House and History Store in Hereford. Particular highlights are:

**Old ways of wellbeing**  
Saturday 4 October, 10am–12pm  
Old House Hereford

Discover simple wellbeing practices from the past in this relaxed workshop with micro talks, craft activities, and historic objects. Explore how traditional rituals, making, and community care can inspire calm and connection today.

Pay what you feel  
Book via <https://oldwaysofwellbeing.eventbrite.co.uk>



## HEREFORDSHIRE MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

### **Murder at The Museum**

Wednesday 30 October,  
5–6.30pm or 7–8.30pm  
Old House Hereford

There has been a murder at the Old House Hereford! The notorious curator, Dr Beddows, has been found dead—and it's up to you to solve the crime. Join us for an evening of intrigue and 1920's glamour as you uncover clues, interrogate suspects, and crack the case.

Ticketed – £10 per person

Book via <https://murderatthehouse.eventbrite.co.uk>

Ages 13+ (under 18s must be accompanied by adults)

If you're a parent or carer of a pre-school child or baby, why not try our regular themed sensory play, storytelling and fun activities. These take place at the History Store, Hereford every second Monday of the month.

- Baby Pips is for babies and toddlers (up to two years old) and takes place from 10.30am–12pm.
- Little Pips is for pre-school children from two to five years of age and takes place from 2–3.30pm.

For further details and to book your place (£5 per child and adult per session) visit our Eventbrite pages: <https://Herefordbabypips.eventbrite.co.uk> and <https://Herefordlittlepips.eventbrite.co.uk>.

*We've got a whole programme of exciting activities coming up throughout the autumn and winter. To find out more, follow 'Herefordshire Museums & Galleries' on Facebook or pick up our latest 'What's On' guide from the Old House, Hereford, the History Store, Hereford, your local library or Tourist Information Centres.*

# Cut · collect · compost - register for new garden waste service

Residents are invited to register their interest in a new garden waste collection service launching from March 2026.

The service will be offered on a fortnightly basis and will replace the single use green plastic sacks currently purchased from us, which are being discontinued.

At a cost of £60 per year (plus an additional one-off £10 delivery charge for your new bin) it's significantly cheaper than a similar service offered by an alternative local provider.

Subscribers will be given a new 240 litre brown bin to collect their lawn cuttings, hedge clippings, leaves, twigs, small branches, dead flowers and weeds. All this green waste will be composted and turned into soil improver compost, available to purchase from our Household Waste Recycling Centre for only £3 per bag!

Don't worry if you have no space for a bin at your property - you can opt instead for reusable sacks to collect your waste.

Bins can be shared between neighbours and there are subscription options for those with larger gardens.

Whichever option you choose, it will mean no more trips to the Recycling Centre to get rid of your garden clippings, resulting in extra time to spend in your garden,

cost savings and environmental benefits.

To find out more or to register your interest, please visit: [http://www.my.herefordshire.gov.uk/service/Garden\\_waste\\_collection\\_\\_Expression\\_of\\_interest](http://www.my.herefordshire.gov.uk/service/Garden_waste_collection__Expression_of_interest)

You will not be asked to pay anything at this stage, it's just to help inform our decisions on the delivery of containers and for development of collection rounds.



## Pharmacy First: Quick Help for Common Conditions

Residents across Herefordshire and Worcestershire can now access more healthcare services directly from their local community pharmacy-without needing to see a GP first.

Trained pharmacists can now diagnose and supply prescription-only medicines for seven common issues:

- Sore throats (5+),
- Earache (1-17),
- Sinusitis (12+),
- Infected insect bites (1+),
- Impetigo (1+),
- Shingles (18+),
- UTIs in women under 65.

Consultations are private, and if needed, pharmacists will advise on next steps. Usual NHS charges apply. Since early 2024, 86%

of users reported a positive experience.

Contraception at Your Pharmacy  
Many pharmacies now offer oral contraception services, including repeat prescriptions. From October 2025, Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) will be free for all.

Local, Convenient, Accessible  
Pharmacies offer extended hours and walk-in or bookable appointments. Some consultations can be done remotely (except earache), making them ideal for rural or hard-to-reach areas.

Find the new service at a pharmacy near you using the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/>

[nhs-services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/](https://www.nhs.uk/services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/)

Find a pharmacy that offers the contraceptive pill without a prescription: [www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/find-a-pharmacy-offering-contraceptive-pill-without-prescription/](https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/find-a-pharmacy-offering-contraceptive-pill-without-prescription/)



Think pharmacy first

See your pharmacist  
Help us help you



# Feel Good for Life with Halo Leisure

Halo's award-winning dementia programme, 'Feel Good for Life', is one of many initiatives being run at Halo Leisure's community-focused centres. It provides opportunities for people living with dementia, depression or loneliness and their carers to be active and to socialise and is available at Halo sites in Leominster and Hereford.



Launched two years' ago, and funded by Herefordshire Council, Dementia Matters Herefordshire, Wye Valley NHS Trust and Alzheimer's UK, each session is run by specially trained staff and caters for a range of abilities and ages.

A diagnosis of dementia does not mean you have to stop doing the activities you love or stop trying new things. In fact, evidence shows that low impact exercise can be beneficial for physical and mental health and improve the quality of life for people in all stages of dementia.

For Frank and Jan, Feel Good for Life opened up a world of support and new friends.

They live in Hereford and were enjoying retirement until Jan's health started to deteriorate and she was diagnosed with dementia. Following a referral to the programme, the improvements to the couple's mental health and wellbeing over the past 18 months has been astonishing.

Frank said: "It's not easy living with dementia but thanks to Halo we feel better understood. They offer all sorts of things such as cycling, singing, exercise, gym sessions, afternoon tea, crafts and much more that we can do together and with new friends who are themselves carers or living with a struggle or diagnosis."

The NHS' 10 year plan is clear about the benefits of community-

led health and social care initiatives. Herefordshire has many great examples of how successful these can be, including Feel Good for Life.

Halo's CEO says: "Not only do we see individual lives enriched by initiatives such as this, we also see how family, friends, colleagues and the wider community benefit from each other's better health and experiences. There are also benefits to the NHS. We couldn't be more proud to be playing a part in that."

If you'd like to find out more about Feel Good for Life, visit the Halo Leisure website: <https://haloleisure.org.uk/feelgoodforlife/> or pop into one of their centres across the county.



Funded by  
UK Government



TALK WELLBEING

**NHS**  
Herefordshire and  
Worcestershire



## WorkWell

Is your health affecting your ability to work? Try WorkWell for free, confidential support to get you back on track.

Find out more... Scan the QR code or visit:  
[www.hwics.org.uk/our-services/workwell](http://www.hwics.org.uk/our-services/workwell)



# Look after your mental wellbeing

Looking after your mental wellbeing is as important as looking after your physical health but can often be overlooked. Poor mental wellbeing can lead to reduced energy levels, feeling tired or irritable, tearful or depressed. Your physical well-being may also be affected.

So, why not follow these simple steps to boost your mood and reduce your stress levels.

## Stay Social

Stay connected with friends, family and the community. Call or text a loved one, grab a coffee with a friend or smile at a stranger. Small moments of connection make a big difference.

## Move your body

You don't have to run a marathon! A short walk, taking the stairs instead of the lift, dancing to your favourite song or stretching can all help lift your mood.

Find what makes you feel good and do more of it.

## Take notice

"Take a moment to stand and stare". Slow down and appreciate the little things in life. Notice the colours of the sunset, savour your morning coffee or listen to the sounds around you.

## Stay curious

Learn new things to keep your brain active and engaged. It could be reading a book, trying out a recipe, learning a language or starting a new hobby. Staying curious keeps life exciting and fulfilling.

## Spread kindness

A little kindness goes a long way. Help a neighbour, donate to a cause (if you can afford to), even saying thank you will create a ripple effect of positivity. Or consider volunteering in your local community.

A wide range of support for good mental health is available in the county. From tips on how to maintain good mental health to support when you need it, check out the resources on our Talk Community website. This includes specialist help for men, members of the farming community and younger people. For urgent mental health support, contact the Samaritans (116 123), NHS 111 (option 2) or dial 999.

## Baton of Hope coming to Hereford



The Baton of Hope is coming to Hereford on Thursday 2 October. This is a national campaign aimed at increasing awareness, fostering hope and inspiring action to reduce suicide rates across the county.

The route will pass through Hereford city, leaving Hereford, Ludlow and North Shropshire College on Folly Lane, Hereford at 9.30am and travelling past the Courtyard, Hereford Football Club, Hereford Cathedral and Halo Leisure Pool before finishing at the Town Hall.

Volunteers from Hereford who have been personally affected by suicide or attempted suicide will be amongst the baton bearers.

Please do pop down and show your support if you're in the area on the day.



**NHS**  
Herefordshire and  
Worcestershire

## Girls' and Women's Health

- Period Problems
- STI/HIV Screening
- Planning a Pregnancy
- Pelvic Health
- Breast Pain
- Menopause
- Cervical Screening
- Contraception



[www.hwics.org.uk/our-services/girlss-and-womens-health](http://www.hwics.org.uk/our-services/girlss-and-womens-health)



If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please email:  
[herefordshirenow@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:herefordshirenow@herefordshire.gov.uk)