

Ward Report – April 2023
From your Local Community Champion – Ward Councillor Barry Durkin

Old Gore Ward

Brampton Abbots, Brockhampton with Much Fawley, How Caple, Kings Caple, Much Marcle, Upton Bishop and Woolhope.

Dear Parish Councillors and Residents, welcome to this edition of my ward report I hope you find it interesting and there is a 'useful information' section at the end.



Dear resident,

As usual this ward report provides information relating to Herefordshire and primarily for Old Gore Ward and its parish councils. Hopefully, the messages provided will still give you information and details on where to find further details and/or how to report issues.

To enable this report I have consulted with many sources including information provided by other councillors. Next month on 4th May Herefordshire has local elections and we are currently in Purdah. This pre-election period describes the period of time immediately before elections or referendums when specific restrictions on communications activity are in place.

There will be no ward report for May due to the local elections. Please forward this update to any residents in the ward who you think may be interested and copy me in. As ever if you think I can be of help please do not hesitate to contact me. Stay safe and keep well everybody.

Barry

Local government elections on 4 May 2023

The last local government elections in Herefordshire were held in 2019. Herefordshire's next scheduled elections will take place on **Thursday 4 May 2023**, where all 53 district wards and 133 parish/town councils will hold elections for new members.

[Elections 4 May 2023 – Herefordshire Council](#)

Postal voting

Postal votes

If you can't get to your polling station for whatever reason, you can apply for a postal vote but you must be registered under Individual Electoral Registration first. The deadline for the receipt of new postal vote applications or to change or cancel an existing postal applications for all elections is 11 working days prior to polling day.

Postal vote ballot papers are normally sent out about a week before the election. Remember if you can't get to your polling station for whatever reason, you can apply for a postal vote but you must be registered under Individual Electoral Registration first.

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The deadline for the receipt of new postal vote applications or to change or cancel an existing postal applications for all elections is 11 working days prior to polling day on 4th May 2023. Postal vote ballot papers are normally sent out about a week before the election.

Download a [postal vote application form](#) and return it to electoral services by post or by hand.

Voter ID required – for first time at election



Just a reminder, for the first time residents in Herefordshire will need to show photographic ID to vote at this year's local elections.

Residents are being urged to make sure they are ready to vote in May by checking they have an accepted form of ID.

The requirement to show photo ID at the polling station is introduced by the UK Government's Elections Act which was passed last year and comes into effect for the first time this May. This will affect all electors who vote in person or by proxy, at the next local Council elections on Thursday 4 May 2023. Electors or their proxy must bring a suitable form of photographic ID to their polling station before they are given a ballot paper. If someone doesn't have accepted photo ID, they can apply for a free voter ID document, which is known as a Voter Authority Certificate (VAC).

The electoral commission are running a campaign which we will be supporting to remind people they need to have accepted Photo ID in place in order to vote or they will need to apply for a VAC

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id/accepted-forms-photo-id>

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/elections-1/forthcoming-elections-referendums/8>

[Herefordshire residents need photo ID to vote at elections in May – Herefordshire Council](#)

[Check you're election ready – Herefordshire Council](#)

Supporting Ukraine

Last week marked the anniversary of the Russian invasion of the Ukraine, and local voluntary work continues to get aid to their communities. I know that within our county many families have welcome Ukrainian people into their home and continue to support them at this most difficult of time. We can continue to support this work by contacting the details below.

Local teams continues to organise supplies - details can be found on

<https://www.facebook.com/drivingsupplioustoukraine/>

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<https://www.talkcommunitydirectory.org/ukraine>

Council celebrates 25 years of serving across Herefordshire

Saturday, 1 April 2023, marks 25 years since Herefordshire Council was formed. Herefordshire Council became a unitary authority on 1 April 1998 following the split of Hereford and Worcester County Council (which had been in place since 1974) back into two separate counties.

The original council office was at Brockington, Hafod Road, Hereford, before the staff relocated to the Plough Lane offices. 114 members of staff have worked at the council for 25 years or more and have been on every step of the authority's journey. That's a total of 2,850 years of service between them!

[Marking 25 years of Herefordshire Council – Herefordshire Council](#)

There's a new helpline for Herefordshire families that need some extra support

The Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) phone line is aimed at families and young people who are finding family life or being a parent hard to manage or they just need someone to talk to and a helping hand.

The CHAT team can offer support, advice and guidance for families on the following topics:

- Family relationships
- Challenging behaviours
- Housing and financial matters
- Emotional and mental health worries
- Keeping your child safe (on-line and in the community)
- Child wellbeing and development
- Any issue affecting you and your family

Families and young people can call the CHAT team on 01432 260261 and speak with an experienced supporting families advisor.

The line is open from 9.00am to 4.45pm, Monday to Friday.

Local eczema group to help children and families

Children affected by eczema and their families are being encouraged to come along to a local support group, which has recently been re-launched by a Herefordshire mum. Children affected by eczema and their families are being encouraged to come along to a local support group, which has recently been re-launched by a Herefordshire mum.

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Emily Edwards, from Brimfield, whose son was diagnosed with the skin condition at a very young age, set up the group before the Covid-19 pandemic and is now re-launching the face to face meetings for children with eczema and their families. Hilary Havard a paediatric dermatology nurse at Wye Valley NHS Trust, also helps out with the running of the group.

The group works closely with the [National Eczema Society](#) which offers a wide range of information and advice for families.

The group meets on the fourth Thursday of each month, 10am to 12 noon, at the Courtyard Theatre in Hereford as a drop in session, so there's no need to book.

For more information visit the [Herefordshire Eczema Support Group Facebook page](#) or call Emily Edwards on 07980 693634.

[New survey launched to help improve the lives of autistic people in Herefordshire – Herefordshire Council](#)

Neighbourhood Matters from West Mercia Police

Do you want to know what's going on in your area?

[Take Part in Our Annual Insights Survey](#)

29th March – 21st April 2023

What do you think about Neighbourhood Watch?



To find that out, we're running a short survey across England and Wales for members and non-members alike. Your answers will be anonymous and help us identify positives we can build on and areas we need to improve. Additionally, you could be in for a chance to **win a £25 Amazon voucher by completing the survey.**

The survey will be open from 29th March to 21st April. Please spread the word - we would like to gain the broadest possible range of responses representing the diversity of England and Wales.

Please help us by sharing this survey link with your friends, family and networks. Forward this email or post this link <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/5VZ6XB7> to your WhatsApp or social media groups.

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Thank you for your ongoing support! **Complete the survey [here](#).**

We can't wait to hear from you.

WhatsApp Scam

Criminals are targeting WhatsApp users by posing as a friend and asking for a security code. Action Fraud has received over 60 reports relating to this scam.

The scam begins when a criminal gets access to another WhatsApp account which has you listed as a contact.

The criminal, posing as your friend or someone that's a member of a WhatsApp group you're in, will then send you seemingly normal messages to try and start a conversation with you. However, around the same time you will receive a text message from WhatsApp with a six-digit code. This is because the criminal has been trying to login to WhatsApp using your mobile number. The criminal will claim that they sent you their code by accident and ask you to help them by sending it to them. Once the criminal has this code, they can login to your WhatsApp account and lock you out.

The criminal will then use the same tactic with your WhatsApp contacts in an effort to steal more accounts and use them to perpetrate fraud.

What you need to do:

- **Set up two-step verification to give an extra layer of protection to your account: Tap Settings > Account > Two-step verification > Enable.**
- **THINK. CALL. If a family member or friend makes an unusual request on WhatsApp, always call the person to confirm their identity.**
- **Never share your account's activation code (that's the 6 digit code you receive via SMS)**
- **You can report spam messages or block a sender within WhatsApp. Press and hold on the message bubble, select 'Report' and then follow the instructions.**

If you have been a victim of fraud or cybercrime, report it to [Action Fraud](#) or 0300 123 2040.

(If you found the information in this alert useful, please share it with your friends and family. Social media versions of this alert can be found on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#))

Letter from West Mercia Chief Constable – in response to Baroness Casey's review of the Metropolitan Police

Dear residents of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire,

Yesterday (Tuesday 21st March) the report into culture and standards within the Metropolitan Police Service was released. The appalling examples of discrimination in the Baroness Casey Review are beyond unacceptable and the review has also, understandably, become the catalyst for a drive for overall police reform.

I want to reassure you of the action being taken by, West Mercia Police, to ensure we are the best we can be for you, for victims and survivors and for our officers, staff and volunteers.

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We are more inclusive, more diverse, and more reflective of our communities than we have ever been, but racism, misogyny, discrimination, and bias do still exist. What also exists is a drive and commitment to change, to improve. This work had already started before I joined the force and I'm proud of the further significant strides we have taken forward in the last 18 months.

We have been unapologetic in our mission to rooting out corruption, relentless in our approach to getting individuals out of our force that betray our core values; treating any misconduct related to racism, misogyny, and homophobia with the utmost severity. In the last 12 months eight officers have been dismissed for behaviour that fell far below the standards of professional behaviour, letting down our communities and bringing discredit to our profession.

We are strengthening our Anti-Corruption Unit, increasing proactive intelligence gathering and have successfully increased the speed at which we are getting these people out and ensuring they never work in policing again. As confidence in these processes continues to grow you will see more people being dismissed – we will not be quiet when this happens, so that we can demonstrate to you our commitment to an ethical service and the real, tangible outcomes of this work.

We are focusing on improving your trust and confidence in us, and particularly amongst women and girls. We have a determined and clear approach to tackling male perpetrated violence against women and girls. We now have specialist officers dedicated to focussing on doing all we can to prevent harm in the first place and, alongside an additional lawyer to help us as cases progress to the courts, we are committed to bringing offenders to justice.

At the beginning of 2022, we added inclusive to our force values – an important step to addressing inappropriate or unfair behaviours, harassment, bullying or discrimination. We actively encourage our workforce to call out misogynistic, racist, homophobic and discriminatory behaviour.

We have a strong gender balance here at West Mercia Police, particularly at senior levels and within our specialist units, and we are award-winning in our advocacy of diversity and inclusion. However, we are not complacent and are working to encourage greater recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups in the force. We're achieving this by understanding disproportionality in reasons for leaving the organisation and addressing and removing barriers where they exist.

We know our bonds with our Black communities are fragile, there's a lot we need to do to rebuild those relationships, to address race disparities and to change a legacy of distrust. We are delivering against the national Police Race Action Plan and are working to encourage greater recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups in the force.

Here I have shared just some of the ways that we are already working to ensure we are the very best force that we can be. A recent survey across our communities showed that 89% of you have trust in us and 83% have confidence in us. We police with your consent, and that requires your support whilst our officers work hard 24/7/365 to deliver quality policing services and protect people from harm. We are striving to listen to our communities and there are ways that you can help us hear your views and challenge our actions. I encourage you to speak to your local policing teams, join our Independent Advisory Groups, sign up for local surveys and updates that help us focus and improve our work. Together, we can ensure a safer, stronger future for Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Worcestershire.

Chief Constable Pippa Mills

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Our Community Support Officers

When you sign up to our alerts, you can choose which areas you want to hear about and what activity is taking place in that area. You'll also hear about positive police action, good news stories and be able to play an active part in helping us with our public appeals.

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/bb21d405/UARq0VNajkqv1vLf0zKSJQ?u=http://www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk/>

Meet your safer neighbourhood team

We are a dedicated group of police officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) who work with local communities and partner organisations to keep our residents, businesses and visitors safe and to prevent crime and tackle anti-social behaviour in your locality.

Officers can be contacted on the below numbers concerning non-emergency 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.



While the information is considered to be true and correct at the date of publication, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of the information (February 2023)

West Mercia POLICE
www.westmercia.police.uk
@westmerciapolice

The [Neighbourhood Matters](#) messaging service enables residents, businesses and community groups to keep in touch with our local West Mercia Police teams and learn more about what they are doing in your community. **It's free to sign up!**

You can choose to receive updates on crimes and the latest information about on-going incidents. You can also hear about positive police action as well as good news stories, and you can also play an active part in helping with public appeals.

To find out more and sign up, visit the [Neighbourhood Matters website](#).

Report a crime to Police 101

When you sign up to our 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. Sign up below:

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/bb21d405/UARq0VNajkqv1vLf0zKSJQ?u=http://www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk/>

Old Gore Parish Councils

Nil to report

As ever if you think I can be of help please do not hesitate to contact me.

Barry

Barry Durkin

Old Gore Ward

Mob. 07792 882054

Email. bdurkin@herefordshire.gov.uk

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General Data Protection Act

The General Data Protection Act places obligations and responsibilities on any company, organisation and individual who holds and process personnel information. The new General data protection regulations (GDPR) that supersedes the Data Protection act came into force on the 25th May 2018. As a County Councillor I hold a list of emails of local people that I have built up over the years which I retain and use on my council computer and email. **In seeking to maintain legal compliance I am requesting that if anyone is unhappy with I holding your email please contact me to advise and I will remove you from the list.** Otherwise I will retain your email contact and continue to send you monthly updates and occasional key information in my capacity as an elected Herefordshire Councillor.

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Useful Information – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Flooding: emergency contact details – please share with your networks

Environment Agency: 0800 80 70 60 (24-hours) or visit www.gov.uk/report-an-environmental-incident

Flood alerts: Floodline 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.

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.wutilities.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/

Severn Trent water: [0800 783 4444](tel:08007834444) www.stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/check-my-area/

Report a flooded road or highway obstruction- Balfour Beatty Living Places: **01432 26180**

Has your property been affected by flooding? – Please share with your networks

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. Please [report it here](#) or contact TalkCommunityEnquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk.

Covid19

The Latest local Covid data and information www.herefordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus-3

National Covid guidance is available on the Government website www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Talk Community

Email: Talkcommunitycovidresponse@herefordshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01432 260027

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.

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As always please continue to make use and encourage the use of established reporting methods for any highways defect; online, or using the telephone app – for potholes, dog poo

- Telephone customer services on [01432 261 800](tel:01432261800).

Please note that Herefordshire Council strongly encourages Balfour Beatty to promote all service requests and queries should be logged via the HC website at Herefordshire Council website - also download the pothole App to help report potholes as you see them.

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes>

[https://link.edgepilot.com/s/e3b2b34e/ttjzBlvIfEewR-](https://link.edgepilot.com/s/e3b2b34e/ttjzBlvIfEewR-39NN73dA?u=https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole)

[39NN73dA?u=https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole](https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole)

<https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole> or

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

Please use the website or call the customer services call handling team. This will help ensure that everything is logged in to the operating system known as CONFIRM where it can be responded to in a timely way.

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](#)

Report fly tippers

If you spot someone fly-tipping

- Make a note of any vehicle used, including model, colour and registration number. If it is safe to do so without being seen, take a photograph or video of the activity
- Note the fly tippers' clothes, and distinguishing features. If you can hear the fly tippers, take note of anything which was said along with the speakers' accents
- Make a note of what they dumped, the location, weather conditions and how far away you were at the time;
- You may report fly tipping on an app on the website and available for download.

Please send us this information by using the [report flytipping form](#).

Did you know...?

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

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Parishes Councils have their own inbox these email inboxes 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](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200136/travel-and-transport/716/highways-and-public-rights-of-way-map)

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](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5210/highway-maintenance-plan-october-2016.pdf)

Toolkits:

Community commissioning

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/18820/community commissioning model toolkit.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/18820/community-commissioning-model-toolkit.pdf)

Litter picking

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/14134/community litter pick toolkit.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/14134/community-litter-pick-toolkit.pdf)

Traffic Regulation Orders

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2891/application toolkit for traffic regulation orders.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2891/application-toolkit-for-traffic-regulation-orders.pdf)

SIDs

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1859/speed indicator device toolkit.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1859/speed-indicator-device-toolkit.pdf)

Another useful site:

For information on current and future planned roadworks by utility companies

www.roadworks.org

Please do follow BBLP on Twitter for up to date information about road closures, ongoing work etc., and [@HfdsStreets](#) and if you need help to set that up please let me know.

If you wish to make a claim as a result of damage to your vehicle

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/206/highway_claimsplease use](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/206/highway-claims-please-use)

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

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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