

# Herefordshire Now

The residents' magazine from Herefordshire Council | Issue 11 |

December 2022

## What we're doing to reduce the number of rough sleepers

**Cost of living  
crisis**

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**Supporting  
people from  
Ukraine**

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- focus on  
homelessness**

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# River restoration



Wetlands development at Luston

The council has taken a lead role in efforts to support the restoration of the county's rivers

Now, a cabinet commission will be set up to undertake a more strategic review of river quality and to consider how to influence the restoration of the Wye and Lugg. The commission will draw on experience and expertise from around the country, working with other organisations and neighbouring counties.

Work is already progressing well on the creation of a number of wetlands to remove phosphates before they reach our rivers. This will enable the damaging ban on development in some areas to be lifted, thanks to a new, world-first, system that allows developers to buy credits to offset the phosphates created. In this way, it's possible to ensure the overall effect of new developments is 'nutrient neutral'.

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 **Annual Canvass**

**If you're not registered, you can't vote.**

A canvass communication will be sent to you between July and December 2022. Make sure the details are correct and respond using the options provided. For more info visit: [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/annualcanvass](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/annualcanvass)

One person per household can log their response online at [www.elecreg.co.uk/hfds](http://www.elecreg.co.uk/hfds) using their two security codes.

Helpline: 01432 260107  
Email: [canvass@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:canvass@herefordshire.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/elections](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/elections)

The Electoral Commission

Don't lose your right to vote in next years  
Local Government Elections on Thursday 4 May 2023

**YOUR VOTE MATTERS**  
**DON'T LOSE IT**



For more information, visit: [herefordshire.gov.uk/nutrient-management](http://herefordshire.gov.uk/nutrient-management)



To view this magazine online, visit:

[herefordshire.gov.uk/council/herefordshire-now](http://herefordshire.gov.uk/council/herefordshire-now)

This magazine was printed and delivered to you at a cost of 20p a copy. To reduce costs, we're shrinking the print run in future. While this will end our distribution to all Herefordshire households, you'll still be able to pick up a copy from one of our Talk Community hubs, libraries and council offices. Alternatively, you can sign up at [herefordshire.gov.uk/council/herefordshire-now](http://herefordshire.gov.uk/council/herefordshire-now) to have a digital version delivered to your inbox.

All details correct at time of print.

Cover pic: Steve Phillips in his new flat. See full article on page 10.

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# Welcome

The effects of the war in Ukraine are being felt by us all. In this issue, we focus on a family that has hosted people who fled from their homeland because the situation there remains perilous. See our case study on the Wilkinsons and their latest guest from Ukraine across the centre pages.

We focus on another difficult subject on pages 10-11. I'm pleased to say our homelessness case study is positive in that it illustrates there is hope and help available, even for those facing very desperate circumstances.

Throughout this issue you'll find details of the measures we've put in place to help our residents cope during the cost of living crisis, including the warm spaces that are springing up across the county.

Rising costs have also prompted us to re-think how we share our news through this magazine. This will be the last time we print and distribute one for every household in Herefordshire. We'll continue to provide a digital version of Herefordshire Now online at [herefordshire.gov.uk/council/herefordshire-now](https://herefordshire.gov.uk/council/herefordshire-now), where you can sign-up to receive a copy. If you prefer print you'll still be able to pick one up from our Talk Community hubs, libraries and council offices.

**Paul Walker,**  
Chief Executive  
Herefordshire Council

# Committed to improving Children's Services

We continue to work to improve our children's services for the families of Herefordshire. In September, Herefordshire Council was disappointed to receive an Ofsted report that downgraded Herefordshire Children's Social Care Services to 'Inadequate'.

The commitment to make the changes needed to make a difference for children and families runs through the whole council. It has been openly shared that the improvements will happen, but they will take time. Many of the issues are deep rooted and long standing and it will be some time before significant and sustained change can be demonstrated.

Herefordshire Council welcomes the Children's Commissioner, Eleanor Brazil, to support us as we continue to improve our Children's Services. She will bring additional oversight and a wealth of experience to our work to improve the service and ensure that children and families of Herefordshire get the support they deserve.

Looking towards a more positive future, Herefordshire Children's Services is one year into a three year improvement plan, a new permanent leadership team has been appointed and significant additional investment has been agreed to support the improvement work and build a service that we can all be proud of.

New measures have been put in place to ensure closer working with families and communities. A more joined up approach to working with partners

in health services and the Police will ensure better protection for vulnerable children and young people across the county.

Corporate Director, Children and Young People, Darryl Freeman (pictured below) said: "We're really focused on improving the way we work with families and building relationships. The average number of children that each social worker works with in Herefordshire has been halved, which means they can now spend more time with the children and families to ensure they receive the right help, at the right time.

"Herefordshire urgently needs more social workers and a recruitment campaign has been launched to attract more people to work with families across the county.

"Social work is an extremely important and sometimes difficult job, but it can also be thoroughly rewarding, especially when a family is helped to get back on track."





# Cost of living support

None of us can have failed to notice the recent increase in the cost of living. Price hikes for energy, food and other essentials are affecting everyone, putting many Herefordshire residents at risk of hardship. They include the 10 per cent of people in the county who are claiming universal credit and the 4,120 claiming pension credit. We are relatively fortunate in that the Herefordshire's 3.4 per cent unemployment rate is slightly lower than England's five per cent and the West Midlands' 4.5 per cent.

## What we've done so far to help

Talk Community's network of 67 hubs across the county are a good starting point for information. And many are also doubling up as warm spaces to help people who are choosing between eating and heating this winter (see article on opposite page). You can find a warm space near you by searching Talk Community's directory at [talkcommunity.org.uk](https://talkcommunity.org.uk).

## In addition, we provide:

- A generous council tax reduction scheme for people on low incomes
- A council tax discretionary hardship policy – short-term help for eligible residents
- Emergency welfare provision – for those at crisis point
- Help for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness
- Home energy efficiency – energy advice

Information on all of these can be found on the council's website [herefordshire.gov.uk/costofliving](https://herefordshire.gov.uk/costofliving)

Much of the help and advice we provide can be found at [talkcommunity.org/money-on-your-mind](https://talkcommunity.org/money-on-your-mind).

In addition, Herefordshire Community Foundation provide funding grants. See [herefordshirecf.org](https://herefordshirecf.org)

## Other help includes the following, one-off initiatives:

- Household support fund – financial help for hard-up families and pensioners
- Discretionary fund of energy rebate scheme
- Over £1 million has gone on covid-19 recovery grants to encourage residents into physical- and socialisation activities
- Holiday activities and food programme – three-year funding and support for families on low incomes during main school holidays (over 1000 children took part during the summer) – see opposite page for more info

Information on all of the above can be found on the council's website [herefordshire.gov.uk/costofliving](https://herefordshire.gov.uk/costofliving)

## Mental health and wellbeing support

Funding for initiatives like Qwell (free, online safe and anonymous mental wellbeing support for adults); free training in mental health awareness and mental health first aid to community organisations; funding for a community mental health coordinator

For more information, visit [talkcommunity.org/moym](https://talkcommunity.org/moym).

We are also developing a sustainable strategy to focus on food poverty (see food charter details on page 7) and our social value framework encourages employers to sign up to the living wage, which is voluntarily paid by only around 11,000 employers in the UK.

## Care leavers

Meanwhile, with the cost of living crisis expected to disproportionately affect care leavers aged 18-25 years, we have introduced a raft of measures to help care leavers, including: waiving their council tax bills until they're 25; providing a setting-up-home allowance; help with further- and higher education as well as free driving lessons.



# Free activities for eligible children this Christmas



Herefordshire Council's Talk Community team is working in partnership with local organisations to deliver a range of exciting free indoor and outdoor activities for the festive break.

Children and young people (school-aged) in Herefordshire who receive benefits-related free school meals are invited to sign up to enjoy up to 16 hours of free activities between 17 and 23 December.

The Here for Herefordshire Holidays programme aims to get young people involved with new and exciting

*"What Herefordshire Council have achieved with the activities fund is incredible."*

*Si Clarke's family (pictured above) made the most of our offer during the summer.*

activities, from sport to crafts, dance, drama, martial arts and cooking. The programme helps to improve socialisation skills by encouraging children to have fun while making new friends.

There will also be a free healthy meal for children at each activity session. The Here for Herefordshire Holidays programme is funded by



*Fun-lovers: Hallie, Phoenix, Charlie and Summer-Raye enjoyed activities arranged by the council this summer*

the Department for Education. The scheme has provided free activities and meals to thousands of Herefordshire children and young people since it began.

Eligible families can book their places through the holiday activities page on the Talk Community website [www.talkcommunity.org/holidayactivities/](http://www.talkcommunity.org/holidayactivities/)

## Warm winter welcome



*We're going on a warm hunt. Margaret Coldman takes a break from her work to catch up on some reading in Ledbury library*

Soaring energy prices mean many people are looking for alternative ways to stay comfortably warm without racking up household fuel bills they cannot afford to pay.

This is why the UK government is funding warm spaces. In Herefordshire, that money is being used to create warm spaces right across the county. Libraries and other community buildings are being used to give you a place to stay warm, see friendly faces and get support.

Margaret Coldman is area manager for the county's libraries. She says: "We're really looking forward to seeing more of our local residents this winter. The lovely thing about libraries is there's no barrier for people to come into the building. They don't have to say why they're visiting or that they can't afford to heat their home. Libraries are a really safe space for everyone, young and old. We absolutely promise them all a very warm welcome."

*"Libraries are a really safe space for everyone, young and old. We absolutely promise them all a very warm welcome."*



To find out more about our warm spaces, search for 'warm spaces' on Talk Community's website or visit: [talkcommunitydirectory.org/warmspaces](http://talkcommunitydirectory.org/warmspaces)

# Warm win Winter gritters

## Energy help for those affected by the cost of living crisis

A Herefordshire couple has praised a service they used to make their property more energy efficient.



Paul and Claire got in touch with Keep Herefordshire Warm (KHW) when their bills increased even before the current energy crisis. Concerned about spiralling costs, they were delighted to meet KHW's eligibility criteria to have fully-funded solar panels fitted on their property's roof, despite living in a conservation area near Leominster.

The panels already provide around a third of their daily electricity needs. This saves them around £500 on their yearly energy bill. The couple praised the efficiency of KHW's installers for fitting the panels in a single afternoon (the electricians connected them two days later). Paul said he would be happy to recommend the scheme to others: "One hundred per cent – it's a win-win all round."

KHW's team of expert advisors can help you take control of your energy bills. It can help you manage large bills, resolve issues with your current supplier and provide emergency and funding scheme support.



To find out more, call 0800 677 1432 or visit: [keepherefordshirewarm.co.uk](http://keepherefordshirewarm.co.uk)

Herefordshire's team of gritting heroes are now on the roads carrying out preparations for the coldest months of the year.

Working with the council, Balfour Beatty Living Places maintains over 1,000 miles of the county's roads every winter. This includes salting with grit to melt snow and ice and help prevent ice forming. Snow ploughing and refilling thousands of grit bins is all part of the service.

Since late October, the fleet of 15 gritters has been at-the-ready 24-7. They'll remain on standby until March 2023. For the latest road information follow the highways team on



Facebook at 'Herefordshire Highways' and on Twitter @HfdsStreets.

Winter also means wetter weather, and increased risk of flooding. For information on the things you can do to prepare, as well as how the Council works to manage and limit the impact of flooding, visit [Herefordshire.gov.uk/floods](http://Herefordshire.gov.uk/floods)



For more information, visit: [herefordshire.gov.uk/travel-transport](http://herefordshire.gov.uk/travel-transport).

## Support for veterans

Herefordshire has a long and proud association with the armed forces. In fact, serving personnel, veterans, service leavers and their family members make up around 25 per cent of the county's population.

Most veterans adapt well to civilian life. Unfortunately, some find it more difficult. Physical and mental health issues can affect many areas of their lives. Herefordshire Veteran Support Centre recently reported a marked increase in veterans struggling financially. This is of particular concern for the Herefordshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership, which exists to identify needs and find solutions.

Fortunately, Herefordshire has a fantastic range of military charities and organisations offering support. They understand the challenges former armed forces personnel face and provide help with all issues.

If you're concerned about someone who served in the armed forces,



Weekly Café Muse sessions at the Courtyard, Find out more [www.courtyard.org.uk](http://www.courtyard.org.uk)

please encourage them to contact our military charities and organisations. All their contact details are available at: [talkcommunity.org/armedforcessupport](http://talkcommunity.org/armedforcessupport).

Alternatively, Herefordshire's Veteran Support Centre ([herefordshire-vc.org](http://herefordshire-vc.org)) can also help. Call 01432 260656 or pop into 19 West Street, Hereford between 9.00-4.30pm, Mons, Weds or Fridays.



For further information, search for 'support for armed forces' on the council's website: [herefordshire.gov.uk](http://herefordshire.gov.uk).

# Food for thought

## Interested in food?

It may seem an odd question. Yet, the sheer volume and availability of what's offered by supermarkets means that at least some of us take food for granted.

So much so that we toss out about a third of what we buy from supermarket shelves. Essentially, that means we get about **£40 worth of food for every £60 we spend** at the checkout.

To make matters worse, we don't just throw food away: we also throw away much of the packaging that comes with it. This means that about **70 per cent** of all household waste is food and the plastic it's wrapped in. Much of which can't be recycled.

Which leads us to the Herefordshire Food Charter (HFC). The charter's vision is for a thriving and sustainable food economy that contributes to healthy lifestyles, healthy communities and a healthy environment. What's not to like about that?

By signing up to HFC, you can help spread the word about growing, sourcing, choosing, cooking, eating, sharing and not wasting (or wasting a lot less) food.



See our Healthy Start article on page 12.



Rebecca Tully signed up to Herefordshire Food Charter



Want to know more about a healthier food system for Herefordshire? Visit: [herefordshirefoodcharter.org.uk](https://www.herefordshirefoodcharter.org.uk).

# Stop feeding the bin!

Christmas is coming and the bin is getting fat.

That's because we throw too much food away.

A hefty 26.5 per cent of what we throw away is compostable waste. That's made up of things like fruit and veg peelings, as well as flowers. Another 15.8 per cent is non-compostable, including meat and dairy. To make matters worse, 57 per cent of this waste is tossed in the bin in its packaging.

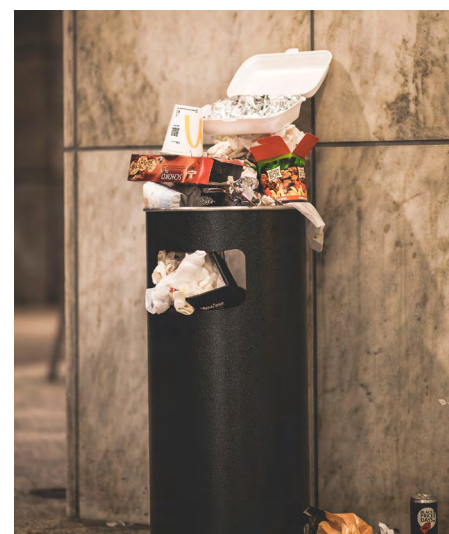
By throwing less food away, we not only create less waste, we also save heaps of money.

Which brings us to our food waste reduction and surplus food redistribution project (yes, we know that's a bit of a mouthful). It's designed to help you:

- Reduce food waste in the home by raising awareness of our own Getting it Right campaign
- Find new local sources of edible leftovers for community fridges, larders and other food redistribution groups
- Share messages about food surplus distribution groups

There is also a glut of information on the Love Food, Hate Waste website. As well as a ton of tasty recipes and tips, it also provides some staggering facts. For example, did you know that 36 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions could be prevented by saving food from our bins?

Search the council's website for 'getting it right' for information on recycling as well as food waste.



Waste analysis: [Herefordshire.gov.uk/binstats](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/binstats)

For further information, visit: [Herefordshire.gov.uk/recycle](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/recycle)

# Cold war

## Could you offer someone from Ukraine a warm welcome?

Almost 300 days since the war in Ukraine began, life in that country will become even more difficult as winter approaches.

While cold causes problems in the UK, they're so much worse for people whose heating systems have been destroyed, where winter temperatures can plummet to minus 20 degrees. Compounding the effects of war, cold will be the tipping point for more people wanting to flee from their homeland.

Many Herefordshire residents have been helping refugees from Ukraine since war began in February this year. But as we head into December, many more are still needed.

If you have space in your house and are thinking about hosting guests, you can find out more on the government's 'Homes for Ukraine' webpage. Locally, you can find out what it's like to host a guest or family from Ukraine by emailing: [hosts-for-ukraine@hereford.anglican.org](mailto:hosts-for-ukraine@hereford.anglican.org).

Guy and Tessa Wilkinson host Dr Oksana Kosyk, a lecturer from Kiev. We asked them about their experience. Guy and Tessa provided combined responses to our questions.

## Guy and Tessa's story

"When the news of the invasion broke, we felt deep alarm for the safety of the people of Ukraine and, as we were privileged to have space in our house, we felt it would be good to share that with others in need."



Ukraine united: Guy and Tessa with their guest, Oksana

### HN: Were you apprehensive about hosting guest/s from Ukraine?

"We weren't really concerned. But, we were aware we would have to listen and learn from those coming here with a different language and customs."

### HN: How do you think your guest/s have taken to life in Herefordshire?

"We had a mother and two children staying with us. Now we have Oksana. She's very happy to be safe from the war. She loves the beauty and peace of Herefordshire countryside."

### HN: What do you think you've learnt from the experience?

"It has been very good to share the joys and pains of their lives here and in Ukraine. Also, we have learnt so much more about Ukraine. We've also shared something of our own country with our guests."

"We've learnt that, wherever we come from, human beings experience the same joys and the same pains. We

have also learnt how to listen not only with our ears but with our hearts."

### HN: What support do you have in hosting guest/s from Ukraine?

"We have had very good support from Herefordshire Council, the Church of England Diocese of Hereford, from Citizens UK and from other sponsors in our area, as well as people in our local village, who have been most welcoming. It has been good to work with so many other local sponsors to support our Ukrainian guests."

*"The most difficult thing for me in Herefordshire was to get used to peace and a peaceful life. Looking at the sky to see flocks of birds, not fighter jets. Waking up to the quiet ticking of the clock on the church tower, not the sound of sirens."*



**HN: Would you recommend hosting to other people in Herefordshire?**

“We both wholeheartedly recommend it to others. Being a sponsor has been an overwhelmingly positive experience and one which we will always be glad to have had.”

## Oksana's story

**HN: Why did you choose to come to Herefordshire after war broke out in your country?**

“I was in Ukraine with my family and relatives for six months before the war. I dared to come to Hereford because my friend and her daughter were already here. My friend told me about extremely hospitable and kind people who provided Ukrainians with the necessary conditions for a good life.”

**HN: How long have you been in the county?**

“I arrived in Almeley at the end of August.”

**HN: Are you in touch with other people from Ukraine in Herefordshire?**

“Yes, of course. Herefordshire has a fairly active community of Ukrainians who have organised groups in social networks and Messenger. They hold meetings to support each other, share experiences and solve important issues. On the Independence Day of Ukraine, a procession of Ukrainians and caring English people was organised in Hereford. It aimed to draw attention to the military aggression of Russia in Ukraine, urging them to stop the war. Also, Ukrainians take an active part in volunteer work and collect funds to help the Ukrainian military.”

**HN: What have you found most difficult about living in Herefordshire?**

“The most difficult thing for me in Herefordshire was to get used to peace and a peaceful life. Looking at the sky to see flocks of birds, not fighter jets. Waking up to the quiet ticking of the clock on the church tower, not the sound of sirens.”

**HN: What have you most enjoyed about living in Herefordshire?**

“The people! Incredibly sincere, hospitable and open. They surrounded me with love and care.”

**HN: What would you do if you had a magic wand?**

“I would stop all wars, aggression and hunger on our planet. Peace is the most important thing in the world! Not money, not goods, not status in society. A person is happy only in peace!”

**HN: What do you miss most about your own country?**

“I miss my family, relatives and friends the most. I miss my peaceful life in Ukraine.”

**HN: Is there anything else you'd like to add about your experience of living in Herefordshire?**

“It was difficult to leave my native country and go into the unknown. Unfamiliar country, unfamiliar people, culture and customs. There is also a language barrier. Among native speakers, having only elementary English is a challenge. But this is probably how the collapse of stereotypes happens. The warmth, friendliness and sincerity of the Herefordshire people melted away all my fears and worries.”

“I am extremely grateful to Guy and Tessa Wilkinson for opening the doors of their beautiful home and also opening their hearts to me. They have created wonderful, comfortable and cozy living conditions. They help me solve all issues. They care and worry about me as their own child. They give me all the warmth of their souls, share their food with me, spend their free time with me, give me the most valuable gift - love! Their bright smiles and strong hugs give me support and confidence in the future! Thank you once again to all English people for supporting Ukraine and Ukrainians! With this kind of support, we are invincible!”



Hereford Help for Ukraine collects and distributes household items for refugee families, free of charge. Visit its Facebook page to find out how to donate or receive goods for your guests. The voluntary organisation also takes lorry loads of good out to Ukraine.

Grants of up to £100,000 are available for new and existing community projects that support the ongoing integration of Ukrainian guests. Search for ‘Ukraine grant scheme’ at [talkcommunitydirectory.org](https://talkcommunitydirectory.org).

The government gives sponsors a £350 a month ‘thank you’ payment for every month guests from Ukraine stay with them, up to 12 months. For further information, visit: [gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-scheme-frequently-asked-questions](https://gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-scheme-frequently-asked-questions)

# Street life



Home sweet home. Steve outside his flat in Hereford

Life expectancy for people in the UK is 79 for men and around 83 for women, according to the **Office for National Statistics**.

Life isn't just halved for the homeless: You're 17 times more likely to suffer from violence when homeless, as former rough sleeper Steve Phillips can testify: "The worst was being woken up by kids in the middle of the night and them setting fire to my sleeping bag. With me in it."

While violence is sporadic, cold and damp conditions can be all-consuming. Steve became so despondent, he says he'd rather spend time behind bars than face more freezing conditions: "I would get myself put in jail instead of being out for another winter. I would have deliberately done some sort of crime to get myself locked up. Jail through the winter is better than being out [on the streets]."

Stories like Steve's go some way to explain why, as a street-dweller, you're nine times more likely to take your own life than the general population.

## Reasons you may become homeless

- Eviction from parents, family or friends
- Eviction due to anti-social behaviour or rent arrears
- Domestic abuse, leaving prison, hospital, care leavers or armed forces

## Herefordshire's three steps to housing

1. If you are, or look likely, to become a rough sleeper, we work with you to find suitable accommodation.

2. We work to move you on to supported/transitional housing

3. We work to move you on to permanent housing

## Steve's life

### How Herefordshire's three-step approach works in reality

1. Steve Phillips slept rough for the best part of 20 years. This can be partly explained by his traumatic background, which included abusive experiences in care that led to brain injury. A long-time drug user, Steve also spent spells in prison.

From Ross-on-Wye, Steve returned to his home county in 2020 after four years in homeless hostels in Birmingham. He soon picked up community orders for begging. His heroin use was high. His mental health was low. He had hepatitis C and received no benefits for a while.

Herefordshire's rough sleeper outreach team came across Steve via Streetlink, which helps the public help homeless people. He was placed in emergency accommodation during the covid-19 lockdown before moving on to Hedley Lodge, where he stayed until July 2021.

# Van life

2. Steve was moved to the council's Whitecross Road hub, a partnership scheme with Citizen Housing for rough sleepers. He continued to build on the success he began in emergency accommodation in this transitional housing. He soon re-engaged with services. Tackled his drug issues. Steve also completed the course to clear his hepatitis C. The support team helped him to eventually stop his drug use. Their support has helped him become a happy, positive person. Steve has written eloquent letters thanking his support team for 'saving my life'.

He moved into his own flat in September, which is light-touch-supported accommodation with Herefordshire Council. He has been invited to be a mentor for Turning Point and speak on behalf of the Hepatitis C Trust. He helped the University of Kent's research into rural homelessness, was recently interviewed by the BBC and has been invited to help raise awareness of rural homelessness to help others.

3. The support he receives is expected to give Steve the confidence to move into permanent accommodation when he feels ready. Supported by the team at Whitecross Road, he will be helped to look at suitable options and register his interest in accommodation with Home Point Herefordshire and the housing register. The ambition is for him to live where he wants in his forever home.



Further information:

Turning Point: [turningpoint.co.uk/services/herefordshire](https://turningpoint.co.uk/services/herefordshire)

For more on homelessness, visit: [herefordshire.gov.uk/homeless](https://herefordshire.gov.uk/homeless)



Chris Franks, Dawn Baker and Dan Carpenter are ready to take Lance into action.

**Chop the first four letters from ambulance. Add some snazzy graphics. And what do you have?**

This sharp-looking van.

Lance is a lifesaver. His distinctive bodywork means he stands out in a crowd and draws people in. This makes it relatively easy for Lance's crew to start conversations when they stop off at various points around Herefordshire. Lance is kitted out with the clinical equipment and space for people to sit and talk in confidence. So, this mobile unit is well-equipped to help those who need it most.

**Where did Lance come from?**

Chris Franks (Turning Point's operations manager) realised he needed wheels to reach people spread out across Herefordshire. But clinical treatment vans were well beyond his budget. An internet search led to the former ambulance.

**Where have I seen Lance?**

Lance has appeared at several community events, including the

recent Hereford River Carnival. He's been part of several blood-borne virus (BBV) testing events in Herefordshire. And, most recently, at pop-up recovery street film festival screenings (see photos on Twitter @TPHerefordshire).

**What kit does Lance have?**

Lance has a selection of needle exchange supplies, including sharps bins to make sure used needles and other equipment is properly disposed of. As well as BBV testing, Lance's team provides lifesaving medication (Naloxone) that reverses the effects of an opiate overdose. Plenty of useful leaflets are also on board. And Lance's pop-up gazebo and seating keeps everyone dry, even when it's raining.

**Want Lance at your community event or know somewhere Turning Point should be offering support?**

Email: [herefordshire@turning-point.co.uk](mailto:herefordshire@turning-point.co.uk)

Turning Point is commissioned by Herefordshire Council to deliver an integrated drug and alcohol recovery service.

# Smart start

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant, or have a child under four years, you may be able to get help to buy fruit, veg, pulses and milk.

If eligible, you'll be sent an NHS Healthy Start card that you can use against relevant purchases in participating shops.

You can use your card to buy:

- Plain liquid cows' milk
- Fresh, frozen and tinned fruit and vegetables
- Fresh, dried and tinned pulses
- Infant formula milk based on cows' milk

You can also use your card to collect:

- Healthy Start vitamins that support you during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Vitamin drops for new-born babies to young children up to four years old



Young children may not get enough vitamin A and D even if they are eating well. If you are pregnant and breastfeeding you may not get enough vitamin C or D or folic acid.

You can use your Healthy Start card to get these important vitamins for free. These come as NHS Healthy Start tablets and drops for children.

Healthy Start vitamins can be collected from the following children's centres:

- Widemarsh
- Conigsby
- Ross-on-Wye
- Ledbury
- Greencroft

## Superstore start

Use your Healthy Start card at the checkout in Sainsbury's superstores between now and 11 April 2023 and you'll get a £2 voucher each week towards fresh, frozen and tinned fruit and veg.



To find out more about the initiative, and to find out if you're eligible, visit: [healthystart.nhs.uk](http://healthystart.nhs.uk).

Find out more about Sainsbury's offer at: [about.sainsburys.co.uk/news/latest-news/2021/09-02-2021-sainsburys-tops-up-healthy-start-vouchers](http://about.sainsburys.co.uk/news/latest-news/2021/09-02-2021-sainsburys-tops-up-healthy-start-vouchers).

# Healthy mums go free!

With everything that comes with a new arrival, new mums often feel a whole range of emotions, from total elation to total exhaustion. A new addition to the family changes life forever. Little wonder some new mums feel completely overwhelmed.

*"It's motivated me to be more active, think more about what I am eating. It's been really nice getting together with other mums."*



Fortunately, help is at hand. Our free, 12-week healthy mums sessions are back. Our experts provide advice on safe weight loss with no diet plans or strict eating regimes. You'll be supported to adopt small changes that make healthy living part of your routine.

All mums with little ones under five are welcome. Feel free to bring along your mini-me for moral support.

After your six-week postnatal check, join us to:

- Get healthy eating and mealtime support
- Take part in safe, effective physical activity
- Lose baby weight and learn how to maintain a healthy lifestyle for you and your family



To find out more and register your interest in joining a group in January 2023, please contact: [healthymums@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthymums@herefordshire.gov.uk).

# Winter boost

Herefordshire's director of public health advises you to boost your immunity against infection by getting vaccinated against flu and covid-19 when you are invited.

Matt Pearce says: "You're more prone to viruses when it's cold outside because you spend more time indoors where germs spread more easily. As cases will rise in winter, it's really important to get your flu- and covid 19 vaccine, if you're eligible. This will help keep you, your friends and family safer."

You'll be invited for a **covid-19 booster** if you're:

- Aged 50 or over
- Pregnant
- Between five years and 49 years in a clinical risk group or live with people with immunosuppression
- A carer between 16 to 49 years

- In a care home residents and the staff working with those older adults
- Frontline health and social care workers

As well as GP surgeries, some pharmacies offer the NHS vaccination. Contact your nearest pharmacy for more information and to book an appointment. For more information about local vaccinations, visit: [herefordshiregeneralpractice.co.uk](https://www.herefordshiregeneralpractice.co.uk).

You'll be invited for a **free flu booster** if you:

- Are 50 or older
- Are pregnant
- Have certain health conditions
- Are in long-stay residential care
- Receive a carer's allowance or are the main carer for an older or disabled person who may be at risk if you get sick

HM Government NHS

**BOOST YOUR IMMUNITY**

WITH THE FLU VACCINE + COVID-19 BOOSTER

People aged 65 and over, carers and pregnant women can now book their autumn COVID-19 booster.

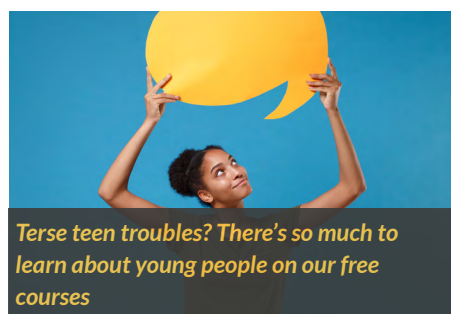
- Live with someone who is more likely to get a severe infection due to a weakened immune system
- Are a frontline health worker or social care worker who cannot get the vaccine through an occupational health scheme
- Have or live with someone who has a weakened immune system

Some people who can get a booster dose of the covid vaccine are also eligible for the annual flu vaccine. If you are offered both, **it's safe to have them at the same time.**

# Learn to speak teen

## And other helpful free parenting courses

Moody, selfish, untidy oafs. Well, that would be some parents' view of their teenagers. Hence the regular 'discussions' (mainly through slammed bedroom doors) about attitude, helpfulness and good manners.



Nothing gets resolved. No clothes are removed from the floor. And the whole cycle starts again the following day, around mid-afternoon, when teen boy or teen girl emerges from their room in search of something to eat.

If this sounds in any way familiar you're probably a parent who needs to brush up on teen-ology. For example, did you know that our brains develop more during teenage years than at any other time after the first three years of our lives? Yep, there's a lot more going on upstairs than you may have realised.

Our parenting course on teenagers will help you better understand why a comment on social media can send

your teen into a moody meltdown. And why they feel so, urch, rejected if they don't get invited to a party.

There's also a whole series of free courses to help parents with babies, toddlers and school-age children. To find out how to be the best parent you can possibly be, visit: [inourplace.co.uk](https://www.inourplace.co.uk).

*Did you know that our brains develop more during teenage years than at any other time after the first three years of our lives?*

# Play it safe this winter

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) urges people to 'stay fire safe' this winter.

The service is advising Herefordshire residents not to cut corners on fire safety. The advice follows concerns that people may be tempted to take risks to keep warm and cut energy use due to the cost of living crisis.

Residents can complete a **free** home fire safety check for themselves or loved ones – find it at [ohfsc.co.uk](http://ohfsc.co.uk). The service may also offer to visit your home to provide free help and advice.

Safety guidance is available at: [hwfire.org.uk/safety-and-advice](http://hwfire.org.uk/safety-and-advice). It includes smoke alarm checks, heating appliance safety and safe boiler servicing.

Emma Roberts, head of prevention at HWFRS, says: "We're working to help keep people safe and reduce the risk of a devastating fire.

"There is plenty of advice at [hwfire.org.uk/safety-and-advice/](http://hwfire.org.uk/safety-and-advice/) and [hwfire.org.uk](http://hwfire.org.uk). You can also contact

our prevention team on **0800 032 1155** to see if you qualify for a free home fire safety visit."



More money help is available for Herefordshire residents at: [talkcommunity.org/moym](http://talkcommunity.org/moym).



# Spot the Spike differences

SHHHH... Spike and his friends have gone to sleep for the winter.

No doubt they're snuggling down cosily in one of the 100 hedgehog habitats we've created in Herefordshire. It's all part of a biodiversity project to boost their numbers.

We've also created a pack of fun, hedgehog-related activities to keep 3-12-year-olds entertained during the coldest months of the year. Some are linked to school subjects, including science, maths, literacy and art.

To give you a flavour of one of our games, see if you can spot the seven differences between the two pictures, opposite.

Stumped? You can sniff out the answers by searching for 'spike the hedgehog' on the council's website and clicking on the link '**Find Spike and Spot the Differences**' on our hedgehog conservation page.





## Quit smoking, start saving

Did you know the average smoker spends around £2,000 a year on their habit? With prices rising quitting smoking may be the change you need to make this winter.

If you are a Herefordshire resident, and registered with one of the county's GPs, you are entitled to support from our stop smoking service.

This provides:

- 12 weeks of stop smoking support
- Face-to-face behavioural support - you can choose from a range of nicotine replacement therapy options
- Support if you choose to use e-cigarettes

To find out more email: [hlts@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:hlts@herefordshire.gov.uk) or call 01432 383567



## Scam alert

If a deal seems too good to be true, it's probably a scam

Marc Willimont, the council's head of public protection, says:

The Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI) recently issued a stark warning about energy scams linked to the cost of living crisis.

"Scammers know people are concerned about the rising costs of their household fuel bills, so are deliberately targeting them with energy efficiency scams. People need to be on their guard against suspicious emails and texts. They also need to be wary of fraudsters turning up on their doorsteps offering too-good-to-be-true deals. Delete those messages. And be very careful about anyone turning up at your door uninvited. They could be there to scam you."

The CTSI says that over 40 million people were targeted last year.

Scams to watch out for include:

- Scam energy rebate text messages
- Energy tariff scams run by people turning up on your doorstep
- Loan sharks preying on vulnerable people affected by the cost of living crisis

Report out-of-the-blue texts and emails to 7726 or [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk).



For more information on what we do, search for 'trading standards' on the council's website: [herefordshire.gov.uk](http://herefordshire.gov.uk).

## Jingle bins, jingle bins...

### Christmas collections

Bins due to be collected on Boxing Day, Monday 26 December, will instead be collected on New Year's Eve, Saturday 31 December.

Apart from this change to our schedule, all other recycling and rubbish collections will take place on your usual collection day this year.

Please put your bins out by 6.30am as collections may be a little earlier over the festive period.

### Household waste and recycling centres

All household waste and recycling centres **will be closed** on **Christmas Day**, **Boxing Day** and **New Year's Day**. Otherwise, they will be open as usual over the festive period. If you have a real Christmas tree, you can take it along to your recycling centre to be composted when you're finished with it.

The page also provides information on how to care for real Christmas trees and how to dispose of wrapping paper, cardboard boxes, Christmas cards and even leftover food.



Visit [herefordshire.gov.uk/christmas](http://herefordshire.gov.uk/christmas) to find out your collection day and what can and can't be recycled at our centres.

# Stress rockets

## Help is available if you're struggling

Earlier this year, a Gallup survey prompted this stark headline: 'World unhappier, more stressed out than ever'. Needless to say, it was not a good news story. The survey found four in 10 adults were worried or stressed. The effects of the recent pandemic were largely to blame.

Talk Community's website has a wealth of helpful information for anyone concerned about how they feel. The site's 'money on your mind' pages also provide lots of useful financial advice for local businesspeople as well as residents. [talkcommunity.org/moym](http://talkcommunity.org/moym)

The NHS 'every mind matters' webpages also offer a wide range of advice to help you look after your own mental health as well as anyone else's you think may be struggling. Call its 24-hour helpline on **0808 196 9127** if it's urgent.

If you feel you can't cope, contact the Samaritans' free, 24-hour helpline on **116 123**.

Featured news article: [news.gallup.com/poll/394025/world-unhappier-stressed-ever.aspx](https://news.gallup.com/poll/394025/world-unhappier-stressed-ever.aspx)



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

### Contact details



Herefordshire Council registered address  
Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE  
Telephone: 01432 260000

# County healthcare

## See where is best to go for winter health issues

Hereford Hospital's A&E department is there to help you with serious injuries or when you become seriously ill. Don't hesitate to call 999 if it's an emergency. When it's not an emergency there are better places to go to be treated in the most appropriate way.

Here's your guide to staying healthy this winter.



General practice



Pharmacy



Sexual health



Drugs and alcohol



Wellbeing



NHS 111



Dental



Mental health



Eye problems

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