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HEREFORDSHIRE NOW

The residents' magazine from Herefordshire Council

December 2024

FREE AND ONLINE



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Herefordshire
Council

Breathing new life into Leominster



Leominster town centre is enjoying a new lease of life, thanks to the restoration of heritage features on shops and the enhanced look and safety of roads and pavements.

The improvements are thanks to the Leominster High Street Heritage Action Zone funding – a multi-million pound regeneration initiative supported by Historic England, delivered through Herefordshire Council and Leominster Town Council.

This major investment in the market town has transformed buildings, restored local historic character and improved public spaces, helping to create a vibrant place to live, work and visit.

Over the past two years, improvements have been made to a number of building structures and facades to reflect the original detail and character of key historic buildings in the town. Attractive road surfacing, improved paving, wider pavements and raised tables at major junction has made the centre safer and more accessible for pedestrians.

Leominster is home to many independent shops and eateries. The improvements will contribute towards restoring the distinctive

and unique character of Leominster, enhancing the town for retailers, residents and visitors and helping to boost trade.



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You can get in touch via 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
All details correct at time of print. Cover pic: Steve, gears up for a busy festive season on Hereford market.

Collecting waste just got cleaner and greener



Two brand new, state of the art, all-electric Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) have been delivered and are ready to take to the city's roads.

The city's vehicles are the first all-electric RCVs to join the bin lorry fleet in Herefordshire and are part of the drive to make recycling and waste collection in the county even cleaner and greener. They will help reduce both air and noise pollution in the city.

Purchased as part of the new recycling and waste collection services contract between the council and its partner FCC Environment, the two new vehicles join the other 26 new RCVs which are now collecting waste and recycling across the county.

The new e-RCV vehicles will be collecting from residents and businesses in Hereford as this area is ideally suited to the mileage range of the vehicles.



Welcome

As we head towards the end of 2024, I'm pleased to say that this year we've really started to see the positive impact of our recent investments.

There's been substantial progress in improving the core services that matter most to you. Whether it's in our children's services, waste collection service or improvements to our roads and town centres, throughout this magazine you'll find examples of how we're committed to delivering high-quality services that meet local needs.

And the coming year is set to be just as busy and rewarding. On page 4 you'll find details of the planned transformation of Shirehall in Hereford as a community hub and home to the city's library and learning centre. And on page 5 we outline the development of facilities for children with special educational needs.

Winter can bring its own set of challenges, but it's also a time when we come together as a community to look out for one another and stay well. It's important to take extra care in the colder months, not only for our physical health but for our mental and emotional wellbeing too. You'll find advice on keeping well this winter on page 10.

Wishing you and your family a happy festive season.

Paul

Paul Walker, Chief Executive,
Herefordshire Council

A new era for culture and learning



Hereford's historic Shirehall is about to be redeveloped, transforming this heritage building into a vibrant community hub and home to Hereford's new library and learning centre.

The new library will be housed in the iconic Assembly Hall, with the stage converted into a seating area for reading and events.

On the ground floor, a learning centre will include a digital lounge, sensory room, and training room, designed to support digital literacy, cultural programming, and wellbeing.

The renovated Shirehall will also offer versatile meeting spaces, skills development areas and unique features like hireable courtroom spaces.

For more details about the transformation of the Shirehall see the council website: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/herford-2020/4

Temporary home for Hereford Library

During the two-year renovation of the Shirehall, Hereford Library has temporarily moved to the Town Hall, where users will find all the usual library facilities.

For more details about the library services in Hereford see the council website: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/libraries-1

Welcome to our place

An exciting project where creative activity is being used to help prevent ill-health and encourage rural identity and pride, has recently launched in Herefordshire.

Our Place is a three year programme running in South Wye in Hereford, Leominster and Golden Valley. Residents will have the opportunity to develop their

creative skills and produce shared art works.

The programme is thanks to £596,000 from Arts Council England's Place Partnership Programme, funded by the National Lottery, plus £86,400 from the council from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and £15,000 from public health funding.



It is being led by Herefordshire Cultural Partnership, and delivered in collaboration with Meadow Arts, Rural Media and Leominster Cultural Consortium. Visit: www.the-shire.co.uk/our-place

Improvement works underway at Brookfield School



Front, Michelle Parkes, Headteacher of Brookfield School with five Brookfield School students. Back rows, (from left to right) Daniel Landon, Contracts Manager, Speller Metcalfe, Mark Eaton, Divisional Director, Speller Metcalfe, Chloe Burke, Senior Quantity Surveyor, Speller Metcalfe, Darren Brown, Site Manager, Speller Metcalfe, Quentin Mee, Head of Educational Development, Herefordshire Council, Councillor Polly Andrews, Ward Member for Widemarsh, Diane Rees, Senior Project Manager, Herefordshire Council, Dan Bowerman, Senior Project Manager, McBains, Dafydd Lawday, Head of MET Academies, Councillor Ivan Powell, Herefordshire Council Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

Building work is well underway at Brookfield School in Hereford, to provide modern learning and working facilities for students and staff at the special educational needs school.

The £4.5 million project began in the summer and will see the new

sports hall, teaching block and altered facilities that will open for use in just ten months' time.

The improvement works are part of the council's £12 million commitment to increase school places and provide high quality and sustainable education

facilities for children and young people in Herefordshire with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The new facilities are expected to be ready for the new intake of students in September 2025.

Need employment advice? YEH!

A new employment hub for young people has opened in Hereford. Situated at 57-59 Blueschool Street, the Youth Employment Hub (YEH!) provides a one stop shop for careers and employment advice for young people aged 16 to 24 years.

Friendly advisors offer a warm welcome and free help and support to find opportunities in further education, training, apprenticeships, CV writing, volunteering and employment.



Artist's impression

A new YEH! website has been launched providing 24/7 access to information on education, employment and training.

To view the website or book an appointment the Youth Employment Hub, visit: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/youth-employment-hub

The Youth Employment Hub and website has been co-funded by Herefordshire Council and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and has also received funding from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Lumi Nova - Anxiety support for children

A free app that helps children to manage their anxiety is now available to Herefordshire families.

Childhood worries can have a big impact on a young person's life and they may start to struggle with every day challenges, become easily agitated and have negative thoughts everyday about the future.

The Lumi Nova therapeutic app helps children to build confidence and learn lifelong skills to manage their worries and anxiety through an intergalactic adventure game.

The app is suitable for children aged 7 - 12 years who experience mild to moderate anxiety and is safe and secure for them to use.

The app can be accessed by visiting: luminova.app/handw

You can find out more about Lumi Nova by watching a short introduction video on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmgrU4zXU3M>



New online neurodivergence zone

A new neurodivergence zone is available to families and professionals on the Herefordshire SEND Local Offer website.

The zone provides information about autism, ADHD and other neurodivergent conditions including dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia and Tourette syndrome. There's also advice on how to support a neurodivergent child or young person.

All of the information has been co-produced with parents and carers, health colleagues and local groups to support Herefordshire families.

To find out more, visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk/neurodivergence



SENDIASS • Supporting Herefordshire Families



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

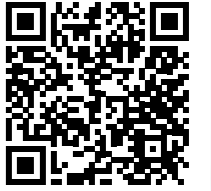
Call: 01432 260955 (24hr answerphone service available)
Contact us: Monday - Friday 8:30am - 4pm
Email: SENDIASS@herefordshire.gov.uk



www.hwsendiass.co.uk



Our local offer to Herefordshire SEND families



Herefordshire Council's website provides parents and carers with local and national information about support, services and

activities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

For more information, visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk/localoffer

Widemarsh Explorers

Widemarsh Explorers specialises in personalised support and specialist education for children aged 2 to 6 years with complex needs.

The hub is based at Widemarsh Children's Centre and offers detailed early years assessments to identify and meet special educational needs (SEN).



For more information, visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-offer-parents-carers/early-years-childcare-children-special-educational-needs-disabilities/7



Could you be a Shared Lives Carer?

If you're compassionate, reliable and would like to make a real difference to a person's life, you could be who we're looking for.

Shared Lives offers support for adults with a wide range of needs to live or stay safely in a welcoming home environment. Approved Shared Lives carers share their homes, family lives and local community connections

with individuals carefully matched to them. This rewarding role goes beyond care, providing a safe home and companionship enabling independence to the individual.

Shared Lives arrangements can be long-term or offer short-term breaks during the day or night.

You will be rewarded with good rates of pay, full training and



support and the knowledge that you are providing a meaningful difference in someone's life.

For more information and stories about the Shared Lives scheme, visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk/shared-lives-herefordshire

Finding hope in Herefordshire

Herefordshire has a proud history of offering a warm welcome and support to refugees.

In March 2022, the Homes for Ukraine scheme was launched to help Ukrainian families forced to flee conflict.

Herefordshire Council responded swiftly, setting up arrangements for donations and support for both Ukrainian guests and their hosts. Since then, the scheme has helped 230 households host 830 Ukrainians in Herefordshire, each with their own story.

Maria and Alina's story

Maria arrived in the county in February 2023 with her daughter, Alina, who has disabilities. They connected with a sponsor on Facebook, who helped them secure visas and welcomed them into their home. However,

as supportive as their sponsor was, the accommodation wasn't suitable for Alina's needs. Maria found a privately rented flat, but the stress of navigating support systems alone led her to consider returning to Ukraine, especially as Alina's health worsened.

A council liaison officer stepped in, helping Maria settle in by sourcing furniture, registering her with a GP, and connecting her to the Early Help Team at Herefordshire Council. When Alina became very unwell, the officer arranged translation support, helping Maria get Alina to hospital. Alina spent two weeks there, allowing doctors to assess her condition and make a referral to Birmingham Children's Hospital.

With support from Herefordshire Council's social services and local voluntary sector support, Alina is now attending school and thriving and her father has been able to visit.

Reflecting on their journey, Maria says, "I am infinitely grateful... Herefordshire is giving my daughter the chance for a full life."

Local people and communities play a key role in fostering understanding, support and hope. There is still a need for residents to become hosts for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. More information can be found on the council website: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/social-care-support/support-ukraine/3

New look website for Housing Solutions and Choice Based Lettings

There are changes to the way that Home Point and the housing register is administered.

For more information see the new website: www.herefordshire.homeconnections.org.uk/



Future success thanks to vital support

Our services for children and young people include providing care for unaccompanied children seeking asylum. The children and young people arrive with a complex range of needs due to their experiences and language and cultural differences. However, with the right help and support the children and young people can go on to live very happy and successful lives.

We caught up with Amar who has been in our care since arriving in the UK in 2017. Amar was born in Sudan but due to the threat of violence to young men he had to flee his country at the age of 16, leaving his mother and sisters behind.

He travelled up through Europe following friends he made along the way, until eventually he reached the UK where he was taken into our care.

Amar is now aged 23 and thriving after finishing university in September last year. He is a qualified accountant now living and working in London and continuing to study part time.



Amar explains: "I want to use my knowledge of finance to support businesses and maybe I will start a business of my own."

Although English wasn't Amar's first language when he first came to the UK, he is now fluent and it's accompanied with a beaming smile when he speaks to us.

Amar said: "I am really grateful to the team at Herefordshire Council and to my personal advisor, Kath, for all the support that has been given to me. I really appreciate that I've had someone to talk to at the council and to answer my questions when I need help.

"Without the support of the care leavers team I really don't know where I would be today and I

can't thank them enough for what they've done for me."

Unfortunately the situation in Sudan has worsened since Amar left and he knows that at the moment it is unsafe for him to return to visit his family. Amar tells us that he misses his mother and sisters but he regularly keeps in touch with them and they are very proud of everything he has achieved since living in the UK.

Amar will remain supported by the Leaving Care Service until he is 25 although he will be able to call us for signposting if he needs it beyond this. However, we know that he is already finding his own way in the world. We wish Amar all the best for the future.

Delivering a better future - start your career search today!

Spirit of Herefordshire isn't just a job portal showcasing all the latest jobs at Herefordshire Council. It's your doorway to a fulfilling career.

Herefordshire has the best of all worlds. It's a place where the whole family can grow and thrive. Children have access to excellent education, there are well-paid

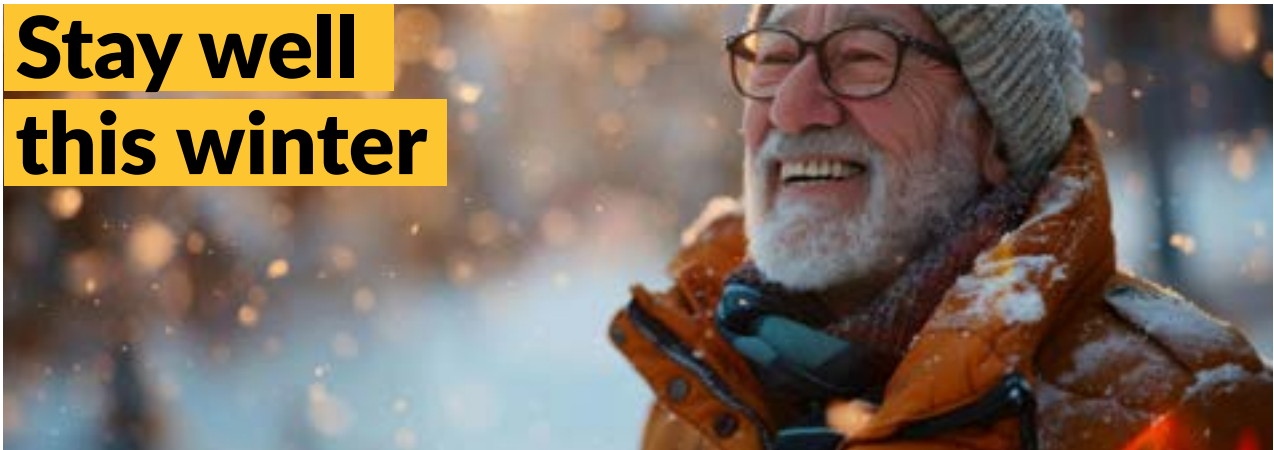
jobs for adults, and family life connects to the local community and to nature. Herefordshire is a great place to work. If you are looking for a new career, why not



Spirit of Herefordshire
A place to Live, Work & Thrive

take a look at the range of jobs we have available. Visit www.spiritofherefordshire.com today or scan the QR code now.

Stay well this winter



As winter descends, it's the perfect time to prioritise your health and wellbeing.

The colder months can pose challenges, but with a few simple steps, you can safeguard yourself against seasonal illnesses and enjoy the beauty of winter.

1. **Get vaccinated:** Visit local clinics for flu vaccinations to minimise your chances of falling ill this winter. It's an easy and effective way to protect yourself and your loved ones.
2. **Stay active:** Take advantage of Herefordshire's stunning countryside. A brisk walk through our beautiful landscape not only keeps you fit but also lifts your spirits.
3. **Eat well:** Savour seasonal produce from Herefordshire's markets. Root vegetables, winter greens, and hearty fruits can boost your immune system and keep you nourished.
4. **Stay hydrated:** It's easy to forget to drink water when it's cold, but staying hydrated is essential for your overall health.
5. **Dress warmly:** Layer up with warm clothing to enjoy outdoor activities comfortably, whether it's a walk along the River Wye or a visit to one of our charming villages.
6. **Practice good hygiene:** Regular handwashing is your best defence against the winter bugs that seem to lurk everywhere.
7. **Limit alcohol:** Consider reducing alcohol consumption to stay sharp and healthy.
8. **Get enough sleep:** Don't underestimate the power of rest. Quality sleep is crucial for a strong immune system.
9. **Stay connected:** Join local community groups or activities to help combat winter blues. Social connections are vital for mental well-being.
10. **Seek help if needed:** If you're feeling low, don't hesitate to reach out for support from services. You're not alone.

There's more advice and information on the talk community website: www.talkcommunity.org/keeping-well-staying-healthy/keeping-yourself-well/keeping-well-in-winter/

Herefordshire Council | TALK COMMUNITY

KEEPING WELL IN WINTER

GET SUPPORT BY VISITING TALKCOMMUNITY.ORG

COST OF LIVING

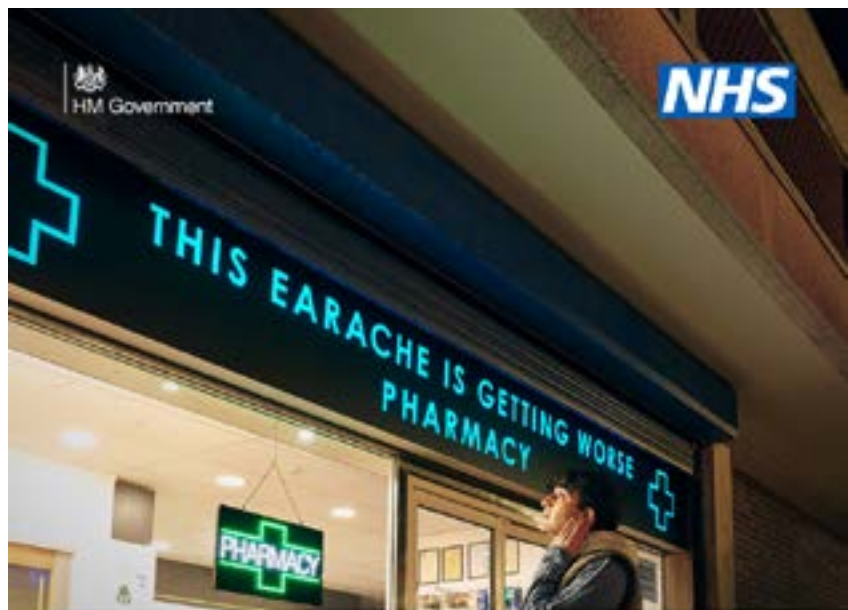
LOCAL SERVICES

WELLBEING

ADVICE

GET WINTER READY

ISOLATION + MORE



Think pharmacy first

Subject to age eligibility, including 1-17 years old for earache prescription medicines. Service available at majority of pharmacies.

See your pharmacist
Help us help you

Make your home more energy efficient, just like Libby



There are lots of simple ways to save energy in your home and many will cost you nothing at all.

Keep Herefordshire Warm offers free energy advice to residents in the county.

One of the success stories is Herefordshire resident Libby

Home Upgrade Grant - Libby's story

"My name is Libby, and I've had the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) scheme carried out on my home.

"I had been keeping an eye out, but when I got a letter through the letter box telling me about HUG, I thought 'that's exciting'.

"I'm very happy with it, I now have green energy in my home and lower fuel bills

"I'm very glad I've now got green energy in my home, because that's something that's very important to me, and I'm sure others will feel that as well.

"I'd recommend it to anyone because it's made a huge difference to my home."

Although HUG is now winding down, the next big initiative is Warm Homes Local Grant.

Grants will soon be available for insulation improvements (for example loft and wall insulation), first-time double glazing and

doors, Solar PV and battery storage technology and clean heat measures (including air source heat pumps) in homes on and off the gas network.

If you think you may be eligible, visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing-3/home-energy/2 now!

For general home energy efficiency advice, call Keep Herefordshire Warm free on 0800 677 1432 to speak to one of their friendly and professional advisors.

Funded by UK Government

Herefordshire.gov.uk

Need help with household costs?

The Household Support Grant provides financial assistance to support families and individuals struggling with food, energy, and other essentials.

Find out if you're eligible for help.

herefordshire.gov.uk/household-support-grant

It's a smooth road ahead

You may have noticed more resurfacing work taking place on our roads recently.

This is thanks to an additional £8 million that the council is investing into resurfacing the county's highway network during 2024/25, with £5 million being committed to A and B roads and a further £3 million for C and unclassified roads.

So far this year over 17km of new and improved road surface has been laid – with a further 25km still to come!

Resurfacing is used on roads that are nearing the end of their



life or that may have significant structural issues.

It involves the removal of the existing road surface, work to the structural layers of the road and a new road surface being laid. It can extend the life of a road by up to 15-25 years.

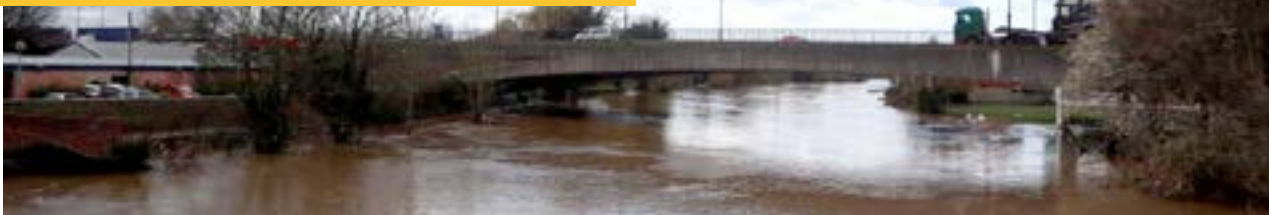
Further lengths of road have been identified for resurfacing following detailed and comprehensive

surface and structural surveys. These surveys help us to prioritise where we need to invest across our highway network.

More information, including a programme of proposed resurfacing work, can be found on our website:

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/herefordshire-road-investment

How you can guard against flooding



It's important to do what you can to protect yourself and prepare to limit the impact of flooding on your property.

Develop your own personal flood plan

The Environment Agency have created a personal flood plan which you can download, print and fill in.

The plan includes a list of things you should do and provides space for you to note down important contact details such as your utility companies and insurance.

Visit: www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan/personal-flood-plan

Keep ditches and drains clear

Ditches and drains must be properly maintained to reduce the risk of flooding.

If you're the owner of land or property that adjoins a watercourse, such as a brook, stream or roadside ditch, you are what is known as the riparian owner and are responsible for its maintenance.

If an owner fails to look after a watercourse it can cause the condition of the highway to deteriorate and potentially cause flooding to properties, the highway or surrounding land. www.herefordshire.gov.uk/flooding-2/flood-management/6

Stock up on sandbags or flood barriers

If you think your property may be at risk, get sandbags or flood barriers in advance. If you wish to keep a stock of sandbags, your local builders merchants should be able to help you.

Flood alerts

Monitor flood warnings and alerts for your area. Use the government's flood warning service.

Sign up to get Flood Warnings at www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings

You can get more advice from the National Flood Forum on how to protect yourself and your property if a flood happens.

The most important thing is that you and your family remain safe. If you are or somebody else is in immediate danger and need rescuing, dial 999 immediately.

For advice during a flood, see the government's Get help during a flood information: www.gov.uk/help-during-flood www.herefordshire.gov.uk/flooding

Beneath the surface

Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) are the council's delivery partner responsible for public realm services in Herefordshire. This includes maintaining our highways, public rights of way, parks and open spaces, street cleaning and street lighting.

They are a team of dedicated and hard-working professionals. We caught up with Colin Frampton Public Realm Supervisor, BBLP, to find out more about his work.

When did you get started?

"I started in March 1996 - so over 28 years ago. Back then the depot was on Grimmer road, which is where Sainsbury's is now."

How did you get started?

"I had recently moved to Hereford and was looking for work so one day I just walked into the Grimmer Road offices and basically asked if any jobs were available and it just so happened they were recruiting for temporary grass cutters for the season.

"I had a great time mowing grass on a brand-new ride on mower. Charlie my teammate insisted that he did all the strimming which was fine by me!

"The season ended and with that the team was asked if anyone wanted to stay on as part of the street cleansing team. I swiftly accepted as my son Conor was due to be born at any moment and that's the start of my full-time career."

How did you end up doing what you do now?

"I sort of fell into the role of a supervisor one day by asking if my



supervisor at the time needed help as he was looking a bit stressed. I started helping him with the day to day running of street cleansing and from there was asked if I wanted a promotion to supervisor which I keenly accepted."

What does a typical day look like?

"As a public realm supervisor in the street cleansing department, I have a great team of 12. Part of my role is to assist and support them in achieving their work in a safe and efficient way and to make sure everyone gets home safely at the end of the day.

"The day-to-day activities are surprisingly varied from the routine work that street cleansing do, which includes emptying on average 476 litter bins every day, road sweeping, collecting 70 plus illegal fly tips each month etc.

"We also have emergency clear ups after flooding and storms, helping with events such as the Christmas light turn on and recently we helped with moving some pews from Hereford Cathedral for an event they were holding.

"Then there's lost car keys in bins and returning lost dogs to their grateful owners - all activities we have undertaken."

What do you enjoy most about your job?

"One of the seasonal roles that I take on each year alongside my normal job is as a winter maintenance driver, which I've been doing for over 15 years and still enjoy every minute."

What's the most difficult part of your job?

"Some days can be challenging but everyone has challenging workdays. I always have support when needed and encouragement from managers and the company."

What makes you proud?

"One of my proudest moments is my son Conor completing the Balfour Beatty apprenticeship scheme in 2015 and who is now in a supervisor role looking after nine operatives and sat only a few feet away from me.

"He says he will be bossing me around soon, so now I feel old!"

Quit with expert support

If you smoke, quitting will improve your physical and your mental health. You will have improved lung function so you will start to breathe more easily, and your blood circulation to your heart and muscles will improve so you'll have more energy.

Your longer-term risk of cancer, lung disease, heart disease and stroke will be significantly reduced.

It is often thought that smoking helps people deal with stress but the opposite is true. Evidence shows that after the withdrawal stage of quitting people have reduced anxiety, depressions and stress.

So, are you ready to quit?

Herefordshire's Stop Smoking Support service offers expert assistance to help you on your journey to a smoke-free life.

Our dedicated team provides a range of services tailored to your needs, including behavioural support, nicotine replacement therapy, and vape kits.

Anyone registered with a Herefordshire GP can access our comprehensive support services. To speak to an advisor, please reach out to us via phone or email, or you can attend one of our drop-in sessions.

If you're over 16 and want to quit we encourage you to take the first step towards a healthier life.

For more information, contact our Healthy Lifestyle Service at hlts@herefordshire.gov.uk or call 01432 383567.

Together, we can make your journey to quitting smoking a successful one.



SWAP TO STOP

ARE YOU A SMOKER WANTING SUPPORT TO QUIT SMOKING?

OUR STOP SMOKING SERVICE OFFERS FREE MOTIVATIONAL SUPPORT TO HELP YOU QUIT SMOKING, ALONGSIDE ACCESS TO:

- FREE VAPE KITS
- NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY
- GROUP SUPPORT SESSIONS
- 1-1 APPOINTMENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO SPEAK TO A SPECIALIST ADVISOR PLEASE CONTACT US ON:

01432 383567
HLTS@HEREFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK

TALK COMMUNITY  Herefordshire Council

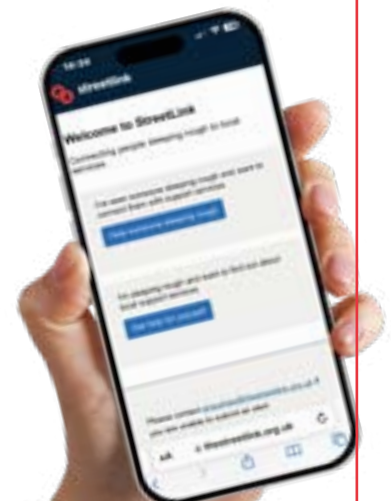


Streetlink is a website that anybody can use to report someone who is sleeping rough to support services.

In Herefordshire, reports that come through Streetlink are sent directly to the Rough Sleeper Outreach Team who can then take steps to ensure that suitable support is offered to that person within a matter of days.

When making a Streetlink referral, please include as much information as possible – as this gives the team the best chance of locating the person and offering support.

www.thestreetlink.org.uk/



Beware the five scams of Christmas



You need to be alert to fraud throughout the year, but especially at Christmas many of us spend more time shopping on-line.

Five scams to look out for over Christmas are:

1. Online shopping scams -

Shopping on the internet can be very convenient, especially when the shops are busy at Christmas. But be careful when you give your credit or debit card details on the internet and always check that the company has a secure site. Try to trade with well-known companies, or those that you have done business with before, or that have been recommended to you

2. Fake website links – This time of year you're more likely to receive

messages and emails offering deals, sales and bargains. Don't click on links as scam emails may lead to a fake website designed to steal your bank and other details. Ideally, type in the name of a website you want to visit. Or you can check a website at [getsafeonline.org/checkawebsite](https://www.getsafeonline.org/checkawebsite)

3. Fake social media accounts

- Social media is an easy place for fraudsters to operate by setting up fake pages or offering bogus goods. Search for officially branded pages to see if an offer or giveaway is legitimate, and never transfer money for goods until you are certain of what you are buying and it is from a trusted source.

4. Scam parcel delivery texts and emails – You may get an email or

text message saying your package has been delayed and it asks you to click on a link to track its status. This link could lead you to a fake site that steals your personal information, so do not give out any details.

5. Scam telephone calls – giving out your details in response to a scam email or text could lead to you receiving scam telephone calls pretending to be from the delivery company or from your bank. Never give out any personal, bank or credit card details over the telephone.

Anyone losing money to fraud should contact their bank immediately and also report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 20 40 or at www.actionfraud.police.uk

You can find more advice and information about fraud on the Talk Community website: www.talkcommunity.org/keeping-safe/safety-at-home/scams/

Avoid food poisoning this Christmas

With an estimated 2.4 million cases a year in the UK, food poisoning doesn't stop over the festive season.

To save you and your loved ones from a nasty bout of food poisoning over the holidays, the Food Standards Agency advises following the four Cs:

Cleaning

Keep your hands clean, especially after handling raw meat. Keep work surfaces clean and thoroughly wash chopping boards soon after preparing food. Wash fruit and veg before eating.

Chilling

Check your fridge is set at 5°C or below. If your fridge is looking full, take out items that don't need to be chilled, such as unopened soft drinks. Freeze any leftovers for future dishes.



Cooking

If your turkey is frozen, check the packaging for how long it will take to defrost. Plan this in advance, as a whole turkey can take 3 to 5 days to properly defrost. Make sure your turkey, or any other bird you're preparing, is steaming hot and cooked all the way through. Follow the instructions for cooking times. Check the meat is steaming hot throughout, there is no pink visible when you cut into the thickest part and meat juices run clear. Cook the stuffing in a separate roasting tin. A stuffed turkey will take longer to cook and may not cook thoroughly.

Avoiding Cross contamination

When you are Christmas food shopping, take enough bags with you so that you can separate out raw and ready-to-eat foods. Keep raw meat and fish covered on the bottom shelf of your fridge so juices do not drip onto food below. Don't wash raw turkey - it spreads germs further by splashing them onto your hands, clothes, utensils and worktops.

There is more information on the Food Standards Agency website: www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/christmas-food-hygiene

BE CLUED UP!

HELPING YOU SOLVE THE MYSTERY OF WASTE

Take a quick look at the dates below and crack the code on this season's collection schedule. The bin collections due on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day have been moved. All other collections remain the same. Please put your bin out before 6:30am



✗ No collections

✓ Revised collection day

Wednesday 25 December

Saturday 28 December 2024

Thursday 26 December

Sunday 29 December 2024

Wednesday 1 January

Saturday 4 January 2025

FREE CHRISTMAS PARKING

Residents and visitors can make the most of fairs, events and late night shopping in the run-up to Christmas in Herefordshire, thanks to free parking that has been arranged and funded by Herefordshire Council.

Hereford: Wednesday 4, 11 and 18 December 2024 - 4pm until late. This includes all Council public car parks in Hereford and on-street Pay & Display bays.

Ross: Christmas shopping event Saturday 7 December 2024. This includes all Council public car parks in Ross-On-Wye

Leominster: Victorian Fair Saturday 14 December 2024

Ledbury: Christmas Shopping Event Saturday 7 December 2024

Kington: Winter Food & Drink Festival Friday 6 (Funded by Kington Town Council) and Saturday 7 December 2024

Please note this free parking offer does not apply to any private car parks, unless stated. If in doubt look for the 'free parking' information signs and check local restrictions.

As usual, it's free parking in our market towns after 6pm every day and all day on Sundays.



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