

**We are currently in a state called Purdah.**

The term 'purdah' has come into popular use across central and local government to describe the period of time immediately before elections or referendums when specific restrictions on communications activity are in place and not deal with controversial issues or report views, proposals or recommendations in such a way that identifies them with individual politicians or their party groups.

**Got five minutes? That's all it takes to register to vote in the May local elections**

Herefordshire residents will go to the polls on Thursday 2 May to have their say on who represents them at a local level.

Local government elections select councillors, who are responsible for making decisions on running services in your local area. These include housing, education, transport, highways, planning, social care and waste management.

In order to vote in this important election, residents must be on the electoral register. The deadline to register to vote in local elections is fast approaching, so Herefordshire Council is urging residents who have not registered at their current address to make sure they are registered in time. Residents who were registered to vote in the last election and whose details have not changed will still be registered to vote.

Colette Maund, Electoral Services Manager for Herefordshire, said:

“We want everyone to make sure they're registered to vote in the May local elections. Registering online takes just five minutes – the same time it takes to load your washing machine! These elections are an opportunity to make your voice heard and have a say on who represents you on issues that directly affect day-to-day life here in Herefordshire. If you're not registered by 12 April, you won't be able to vote.”

Chris Hinde, Electoral Commission Regional Manager for the Midlands, said:

“If you have recently turned 18 or moved home, it is particularly important that you act to ensure that you are registered to vote. It takes just five minutes online and means that you can take part in this important election.”

It takes just five minutes to register to vote, but time is running out. Register to vote online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote).

**Natural Flood Management project aims to reduce the risk of flooding to local rural communities**

A project that promotes the use of natural measures to protect local rural communities from flooding has opened up a grant scheme to farmers and landowners.

The River Wye and Lugg Natural Flood Management project will provide funding to develop land and water management techniques which will reduce the risk of flooding to local communities. The grant will help to pay for the construction of features such as leaky woody dams and attenuation basins. It also offers a financial contribution for adapting land management practices that help slow the flow of water to downstream communities. Natural Flood Management techniques can help to reduce the frequency and severity of flooding,

with the added benefit of improving water quality, creating new habitats and enhancing biodiversity in the local natural environment.

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/781/grant\\_for\\_landowners\\_and\\_farmers\\_to\\_reduce\\_the\\_risk\\_of\\_flooding](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/781/grant_for_landowners_and_farmers_to_reduce_the_risk_of_flooding)

### **Pothole repairs increase**

The number of potholes repaired by councils in England and Wales rose by more than a fifth last year, to 1.86 million, while the one-time cost of fixing the entire road network rose to nearly £10 billion, a report shows. The Asphalt Industry Alliance's Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance (ALARM) survey also found that spending on roads maintenance rose by 20 per cent, but suggests much of the £24.5 million was spent on short-term "patch and mend" work. In an interview with BBC Radio 5 Live, Cllr Richard Watts, Chair of the LGA's Resources Board, said: "Councils share the frustration of motorists about the state of our local roads and fixing them is a priority for us. Road maintenance budgets went up last year and we are now fixing a pothole on average every 17 seconds. But the reality is that councils' budgets have been cut by billions of pounds over the last eight years and there simply isn't enough money to keep running all the services that we provide." BBC Radio 5 Live, ITV News

### **Stoke Lacy and Holme Lacy Bridges expected to close this summer for essential works**

Herefordshire Council, in partnership with Balfour Beatty Living Places, is responsible for maintaining the safety of more than 700 road and foot bridges across the county.

During 2018, we completed 446 bridge inspections - an average of 37 every month.

Through a regular programme of safety inspections, which includes examining all surfaces of the bridge, its foundations and the surrounding environment, the council develops a programme to identify bridges that require maintenance, repair or replacement each year.

- Stoke Lacy Bridge, situated on the A465 at the bottom of Stoke Lacy Hill, requires strengthening work to ensure it can continue to meet the demands of modern-day traffic. This will require workers to dig down to the original arch of the bridge and install a new concrete 'saddle' before resurfacing it. The A465 over the bridge will need to close for the duration of the works, which are expected to begin in July or August 2019 and take approximately eight to ten weeks to complete.
- Holme Lacy Bridge, which is situated on the B4399, needs the bearings at its west end replacing. The bridge would then have new expansion joints installed and be resurfaced. Work is expected to commence in the summer and will also take a number of weeks to complete. While the majority of the work will be completed under temporary traffic lights, enabling a lane across the bridge to remain open, some closure periods, each lasting several days, will be unavoidable.

#### **Bridge closures summer 2019**

Local residents and businesses around both locations will receive letters later this month informing them of likely work this summer and reasons for it. There will inevitably be delays and inconvenience at both sites while work is undertaken.

Clive Hall, Acting Assistant Director for Highways and Transport at Herefordshire Council said:

“We understand that any closure or reduction in traffic flow will be unwelcome but, by alerting local residents and businesses early, we hope to provide communities every opportunity to share their views and suggestions. We will consider these as we develop our plans.

“Both bridges sit on busy roads and are used by thousands of people every week. We need to ensure that they can continue to serve road users for decades more to come as we currently are at Storesbrook Bridge, near Ledbury, where we have delivered a new bridge that will serve road users for generations to come.

“We will provide further updates on planning for work at both locations via our social media – Twitter and Facebook – as soon as information becomes available and we will, of course, write to residents when precise dates and diversion arrangements are known. In the meantime I would ask anyone with comments, questions or suggestions to forward them to our Highways Customer Services Team.”



**Barry Durkin**  
Old Gore Ward  
Mob. 07974 212020

#### Parishes

#### 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 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](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200146/council_tax/39/council_tax_reduction)

#### Please report any problems on highways or footpaths using the links below or phone 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 <https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole> or <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes>

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.

For any PROW (Public Rights of Way) maps or problems, you can report these via the following link on the Herefordshire Council's website: [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200136/travel\\_and\\_transport/248/public\\_rights\\_of\\_way\\_map](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200136/travel_and_transport/248/public_rights_of_way_map)  
You can search for PROW information on the map using: - Footpath references, Postcodes, Addresses and Grid References e.g. 354000 254000

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\\_claimspleaseuse](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/206/highway_claimspleaseuse)

Report fly tipping it will be dealt with in a much quicker time frame by either calling the Contact Centre above or by logging the fly tipping via the council website on the links below as your enquiry  
[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200226/report\\_a\\_problem/98/fly\\_tipping](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200226/report_a_problem/98/fly_tipping)

#### General Data Protection Regulations Statement

The General Data Protection Act places obligations and responsibilities on any company, organisation and individual who hold and process personnel information, and it comes into force on the 25th May 2018; superseding the Data Protection Act 1998. As a County Councillor I

Ward Report  
Old Gore Ward – Herefordshire Council  
March 2019

---

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. I can give you all the reassurance that I do not and will not share those email addresses with any third party. **In seeking legal compliance as a data controller I am requesting that if anyone is unhappy with my holding their email contact that you please advise me so that I am able to remove you from the list.** Otherwise I will retain your email contact and continue to send you monthly updates, emails as required and occasional key information.