



Herefordshire Council Update Oct 2025

Cllr Toni Fagan – Birch Ward

Chief Executive to retire

Paul Walker has announced that he will step down from the role of CEO in March 2026.

Fair Funding Review will penalise Herefordshire

Proposed changes to the way in which government funding is allocated will result in significant budget gaps in future years. This will potentially affect services and support for residents and communities.

Herefordshire Council will face significant challenges in balancing its budget in 2026/27 and beyond if planned changes in the way government distributes funding to local authorities go ahead. The Council has found millions of pounds worth of savings for council tax-payers, while improving key services for residents. However, proposed changes could bring about real impact on communities.

Independent modelling based on the new Fair Funding Review points to a potential funding gap in 2026/27 of around £27.3 million, 11% of the council's net budget. This will see Herefordshire's share of national funding dropping below the average for unitary councils in England. Cabinet has already warned of the maximum (4.99%) council tax increase for the next financial year.

Parish Summit – 7 Oct

- Official launch of the Charter for Herefordshire's Councils
- Budget Update
- Local authorities and devolution update
- Parish Grants, to include PROW, drainage and Lengthsman
- Neighbourhood Development Plan

Before the main session starts at 6.30pm, come along from 4.30pm to:

- Network with fellow parish councillors and clerks
- Explore our marketplace of council teams and services

Two parish council representatives offered places. There will be a hard copy of The Charter for Herefordshire's Council for all councils available on the night.

Please note that **we are offering a virtual option**, if you select this you will receive the invite via email nearer the time, and will only be for the body of the summit presentation, 6:30pm – 8:30pm.

[Book a place online – herefordshire.gov.uk](https://herefordshire.gov.uk)

Consultations

Share your views on the progress of Herefordshire Council and partner agencies and groups to deliver the **Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-25**.

4 September to 20 October 2025. [Have your say on our homeless strategies – Herefordshire Consultations](#)

Public Realm Framework

Plans for a new Public Realm Framework (up to the value of £100 million) have been announced, aiming to drive major county infrastructure and public space improvements while fostering opportunities for local businesses.

This continues the council's adoption of a mixed-economy model, moving away from reliance on a single supplier to engage a diverse range of providers.

By dividing a more extensive framework into specialised lots, it enables both large contractors and smaller, local firms to bid for specific areas of work. This inclusive approach creates direct opportunities for regional suppliers, strengthening Herefordshire's economy and building sustainable, long-term partnerships.

The framework, which comes into place in April 2026 will support a wide range of major projects, including road resurfacing, highway structures, civil engineering, bridge and structural enhancements, traffic signal upgrades, footway and cycleway improvements, public space landscaping, drainage systems and tree surveys.

Prior to July 2024 the council relied on a single supplier (Balfour Beatty) to deliver all its public realm works needs. In July of that year the existing framework, worth up to £40 million was introduced and allowed more flexibility by allowing multiple suppliers to bid for works, for example roads resurfacing. With the current framework approaching its spending capacity the new initiative ensures continuity, opens up more opportunities for local suppliers and gives resilience in delivering essential services. Furthermore, the new framework's flexible procurement model, allowing both mini-competitions and direct awards, maximises value for money while supporting the Council's ambitions to enhance public spaces and promote more travel options for all road users.

Running alongside the new framework, a separate Public Realm Contract, set to begin on 1 June 2026, will cover high-volume, less specialised maintenance tasks such as grass cutting, pothole repairs and litter bin emptying (in parks and public places). Tenders for this contract closed on 26 September 2025, with the award expected in December 2025.

Highways Update

• Resurfacing Programme - £13.3m

- A&B network works have been in progress since April and are programmed until end of November
- C&U network works are also in progress and are programmed until Christmas

• Surface Dressing Programme - £5.8m

- 43 sites were prepared earlier in the year and surface dressed during August
- Further roads are now being identified for preparatory works ahead of next year's dressing programme

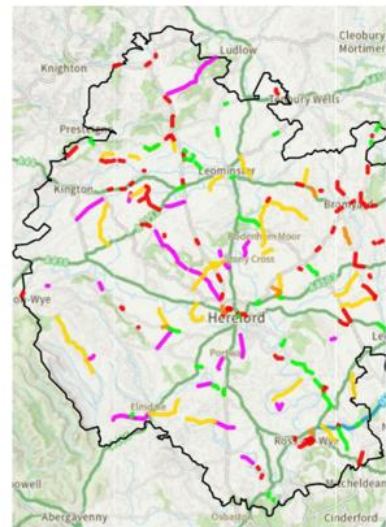


- A Road Map!

- We have been developing an online map to show investment to date and as a way of allowing us to easily share future plans

- 2026/27 Plans

- We have been surveying the network and will be sharing data with you to allow you to input to the decision making process.



Hereford Leisure Pool reopens after sustainability upgrade

Hereford Leisure Pool has taken a big step towards becoming more eco-friendly, with a major new sustainability upgrade. The project is funded by a £60,000 grant from Sport England, with an additional £80,000 awarded to support a range of other energy-efficient projects.

A new Pool Water Recovery System has been installed at the centre as part of Halo Leisure's ongoing commitment to reducing environmental impact and improving energy efficiency across its facilities.

The key benefits of the new system are:

- **Water Conservation:** Saves up to 1.5 cubic metres of water per hour – that's equivalent to 15 standard bathtubs holding 100 litres of water
- **Energy Efficiency:** Reduced need to heat additional water
- **Environmental Protection:** Limits the release of non-sterilised water into the drainage system
- **Cost Savings:** Lower utility bills support long-term sustainability. Projected savings on energy bills are around £16,263 per annum, comprising £2,759 on energy costs, £5,489 on water and £8,015 on sewage.
- **Carbon Savings:** Expected to save 27,930 kg CO₂ equivalent per year – roughly the same as the annual emissions from seven petrol cars

The new system allows the pools to recover and reuse up to 90% of the water typically lost during essential backwashing of the pool filters. The reclaimed water is treated and sterilised using UV technology, ensuring it meets the highest quality standards before being returned to the pool.

Flood resilience

£2.055 million investment over next two years aims to strengthen flood resilience across the county for homes, businesses, and infrastructure in the areas most affected by flooding.

The funding will support a comprehensive Flood Response Programme, designed to reduce the likelihood and impact of future flood events.

The funding will deliver a mix of engineered and nature-based schemes to improve flood resilience across the county. The programme will also improve flood response and help communities by providing signage and monitoring technology. Specialist software will be procured to help the council plan for and manage floods more effectively. The investment aims to unlock further funding opportunities.

Cultural Services bring Vikings to Ewyas Harold – 4 Oct

Organised as part of the 'Revealing our Roots' project, our team will be at Ewyas Harold Craft Centre (HR2 0EL) from 10am-4pm on 4 October for a fun-filled Viking-themed day, suitable for all the family and free of charge.

At the event, you will be able to:

- Follow a mysterious rune trail (runes were used by Vikings for writing and magical purposes)
- Meet real Vikings with the fearsome Black Crows, a Hereford-based re-enactment group who recreate the Viking period in authentic and exciting ways
- Play Viking games and handle incredible replicas of ancient treasures, including those from Herefordshire's most dramatic and scandalous discoveries such as the Herefordshire Hoard
- Take part in a vibrant community art project and get creative with family-friendly craft activities
- Hunt for artefacts with the Herefordshire Searchers, a local group of metal detectorists
- Have a go at woodturning with the Herefordshire Woodturners
- Discover local history and geography with Longtown and District Historical Society and the Golden Valley Walking Club