



LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, CHURCH STREET, LEDBURY

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8 October 2026

To: All Councillors

Dear Councillor

You are **summoned** to attend a meeting of **LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL**, to be held on **Thursday, 15 October 2026 at 7.00 pm** in the **Town Council Offices, Church Lane, Ledbury, HR8 1DH** for the purpose of transacting the business shown in the agenda below.

Yours faithfully

PP

Angela Price PSLCC, MIWFM, AICCM
CiLCA (England & Wales)
Town Clerk

FILMING AND RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETING

Members of the public are permitted to film or record meetings to which they are permitted access, in a non-disruptive manner. Whilst those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording, or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record or broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act (GDPR) 2018.

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive Declarations of Interests

To receive any declarations of interest and written requests for dispensations.

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Ledbury Town Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

(Note: Members seeking advice on this item are asked to contact the Monitoring Officer at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.)

3. **To note the Nolan Principles**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>
4. **To note the General Duty on Public Authorities of Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010** (Page 7626)
5. **To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of a meeting of Council held on 24 September 2026** (Pages 7628 - 7645)
6. **To receive and note the Action sheet** (Pages 7646 - 7649)
7. **To receive Chairman's Communications**
8. **To consider questions/comments from members of the public in accordance with the provisions of Standing Orders 3(e) and 3(f)**
"Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business of the agenda. The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the Chairman of the meeting."
9. **To receive update from John Campion – Police and Crime Commissioner**
10. **To receive motions presented by Councillors in accordance with Standing Order 9**

FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES

11. **To receive and note Budget Monitoring Report for months 5 and 6**
(To Follow)
 - i. Receipts and Payments 1 August to 30 September 2026
 - ii. Balance sheet and Trial Balance – Months 5 and 6
 - iii. Budget Monitoring Reports 1 April to 30 September 2026
12. **To confirm verification of bank statements and reconciliations for August and September 2026**
13. **To approve Invoices for Payment** (To Follow)

GOVERNANCE

14. **Council Policies** (Pages 7650 - 7691)
- i. Training and Development Policy
 - ii. Dignity at Work/Civility & Respect
 - iii. Councillor and Staff Protocol
15. **To receive any updates in respect of Code of Conduct Matters**

PLANNING, ECONOMY & TOURISM

16. **To consider Planning Consultations** (Page 7692 - 7693)
17. **To receive and note update on Planning Decisions** (Pages 7694 - 7697)
18. **Appeal Notification - 262049** (Pages 7698 - 7699)
19. **Representation at Herefordshire Council Planning Committee**
(Standing Item)
20. **Request for Traffic Measures – Bank Crescent, Ledbury**
(Pages 7700 - 7701)
21. **Painted Room and Market House Visitor Numbers - March to August 2026**
(Pages 7702 - 7707)
22. **Request for Stakeholder Meeting – Gladman Developments Ltd (Land East of Dymock Road)**
(Page 7708)
23. **To receive and note the outcome of the Boundary Commission Review**
(Pages 7710 - 7755)

ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

24. **To give consideration to quotes for updating the Maps within the Town's Notice Board**
(Pages 7756 - 7762)
25. **Request for support from Ledbury Town Council in respect of a proposed 3-year project to be undertaken by WildPlay**
(Pages 7764 - 7766)

RESOURCES

26. **To receive and note the minutes of the Resources Committee held on 24 September 2026 and give consideration to any recommendations therein**
(Pages 7768 - 7770)

GENERAL

27. **Masefield Matters** (Standing Item) (Page 7772)
To receive and note report submitted to National Lottery Heritage Fund

28. **To give consideration to the Draft Herefordshire Youth Strategy 2026/27** (Pages 7774 - 7780)

29. **Outside Bodies** (Standing Item)

30. **Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next meeting of Council is scheduled for 5 November 2026 at 7.00 pm

31. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public are excluded from the remainder of the meeting

32. **Upperfields Drainage Scheme** (Pages 7781 - 7785)

Distribution: Full agenda and reports to all Councillors (10)
Plus file copy

FULL COUNCIL	15 OCTOBER 2026	AGENDA ITEM: 4
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SECTION 149 OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

Members are requested to note the information provided below and give due consideration to Section 149 in their decision making as set out within.

Equality Duty

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the “general duty” on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires Ledbury Town Council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that they are paying ‘due regard’ in their decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL
HELD ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2026**

PRESENT: Councillors: Harvey (Chair), Hamblin (Vice-Chair), Bradford, Eakin, Hughes and Wilkinson

ALSO PRESENT:

Angela Price – Town Clerk
Julia Lawrence – Operations Manager
Sophie Rudd – Minute Taker
Councillor Stef Simmons – Ledbury North
Councillor Justine Peberdy – Ledbury West
Several members of the public

C1543. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chowns, Morris and Troy.

C1544. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bradford declared a non-pecuniary, non-registerable interest in Agenda Item 17, Planning Application 262052 as he lives in close proximity to the site of the proposed pump track.

C1545. TO NOTE THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES

RESOLVED:

That the Nolan Principles be received and noted.

C1546. TO NOTE THE GENERAL DUTY ON PUBLIC AUTHORITIES OF SECTION 149 OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Clerk advised that this duty would apply to Agenda Item 17 in relation to the proposed pump track.

RESOLVED:

That the General Duty on Public Authorities of Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 be received and noted, with the Clerk advising Members of any items on the agenda that it is appropriate to consider under this Duty.

C1547. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of a meeting of Council held on 3 September 2026 be approved and signed as a correct record.

C1548. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE ACTION SHEET

RESOLVED:

That the action sheet be received and noted.

C1549. TO RECEIVE WARD COUNCILLOR REPORTS

i. Councillor Harvey – Ledbury North

Councillor Harvey provided a verbal report informing Members that she had received contact from residents in relation to resurfacing works at Robinsons Meadow. She had also received correspondence regarding parking close to the junction of Newbury Park and The Homend and had asked Herefordshire Council Officers to consider whether the existing yellow lines could be extended, with possible funding from the Market Town Public Realm Fund. Councillor Harvey further advised that the retrospective planning application relating to the Diamond Koz Kebab Shop had been approved with conditions requiring a smaller fascia/signage and less intrusive lighting, with further discussions ongoing regarding internal works and the ceramic tiles.

ii. Councillor Peberdy – Ledbury West

Councillor Peberdy reported that she hoped local bus operators would participate in the £2 bus fare cap scheme.

iii. Councillor Simmons – Ledbury South

Councillor Simmons asked that her ward report be referred to when the pump track was discussed under Agenda Item 17.

C1550. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

Councillor Harvey confirmed that she would provide an update at the October meeting of Council.

C1551. TO CONSIDER QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF STANDING ORDERS 3(E) AND 3(F)

It was agreed that Agenda Item 17 be brought forward to immediately follow public participation, allowing members of the public in attendance to hear the item discussed.

This item related to **Planning Application 262052 – Land at Martins Way, Ledbury** – construction of a pump track and associated landscaping.

Three members of the public addressed the Council in relation to the proposed pump track. Their written statements will be attached to these minutes once received. The members of the public were thanked for their comments and time.

Councillor Harvey explained that additional documentation from the Section 106 Officer had been received shortly before the meeting, however due to the short notice of receipt it had not been possible for Members to read the information and comment on it at this meeting.

Members were advised that the Council was not limited to making one comment on the planning portal in respect of this planning application and that further comments or questions could be submitted at a later date.

It was confirmed that the adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan remained part of the planning policy framework and carried weight in the determination of the application.

It was considered unlikely that the application would be brought before the Herefordshire Council Planning Committee in October, given the amount of work and consultation still outstanding.

Councillor Harvey asked that it be placed on record that she considered it unsound not to consider properly the additional information and relevant planning policies prior to the Council making a decision on a response to the planning application.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Members receive and note the minutes of a meeting of the Major Planning Applications Working Party held on 17 September 2026.**
- 2. That Ledbury Town Council submit an objection to the planning application based on factual planning grounds raised at the meeting, in respect of Planning Application 262052, noting the following:**
 - Relative distance to residential homes**
 - Drainage concerns and water run-off**
 - Lack of toilet facilities**
 - Lack of parking provision**
 - Future maintenance and ownership**
 - Health and safety concerns**
 - Whether the site would continue to be available for the air ambulance to land in emergencies**
 - Noise**
 - Residential amenity**
 - Quality of the application; and that**
 - Consideration of NDP Policies CL1.1 and CL2.1, OS3 and TR1.2.**

Councillor Harvey abstained from the vote due to her role as Ward Councillor advising that she would deal with this at a different stage of the planning process.

Members of the public left the meeting at 8:08 pm, with Ward Councillors and Mr Barrington Hill remaining.

Councillors Simmons and Peberdy left the meeting at 8:13 pm.

C1552. TO RECEIVE MOTIONS PRESENTED BY COUNCILLORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 9

None received.

C1553. TO APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT

RESOLVED:

1. That the invoices for payment in the sum of £18,992.49 + VAT be approved.
2. That Members receive and note the information in respect of month 6 salaries, noting the breakdown as shown below, noting that the increase in month 6 was due to the addition of the back pay arising from the agreed annual pay award, effective from 1 April:

Salaries (Net)	£26,204.84
Employer NICs	£10,395.17
Employer Pension	<u>£ 7,150.95</u>
TOTAL	£43,750.96

C1554. GRANT APPLICATIONS

i. Ledbury Rainbows

Members noted that it had previously been agreed that multi-year grants would not be awarded whilst the Grants process is under review.

RESOLVED:

1. That Members award a grant of £200 to Ledbury Rainbows for the first year of the proposed multi-year grant, noting that the application meets the criteria of the Local Government Act 1972, s.137 – Power to incur expenditure for certain purposes not otherwise authorised.

2. That consideration of the remaining years of the multi-year grant application be deferred until the Grants process has been reviewed.

ii. John Masefield High School

RESOLVED:

1. That the application for a multi-year grant in the sum of £500 to John Masefield High School be declined on the grounds that the proposed project is literacy-based and therefore falls within the core curriculum and therefore should be managed through the funds provided via the Local Education Authority.

C1555. TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO PURCHASE SNOW AND BUBBLE MACHINES TO SUPPORT FUTURE COUNCIL EVENTS AND FOR POSSIBLE HIRE BY ORGANISATIONS

RESOLVED:

1. That officers be instructed to purchase the BeamZ SNOW5000 Professional Snow Machine and BeamZ B2500 Professional Bubble Machine at a combined cost of £958.99.
2. That officers provide a report to a future meeting of Council proposing a hire policy and costings for both machines.
3. That the Clerk confirm the budget line from which the purchase will be made.

C1556. COUNCIL POLICIES

- i. Training and Development Policy

RESOLVED:

1. That due to time constraints, this agenda item be deferred to a future meeting of Full Council to be held on 15 October 2026.

C1557. CODE OF CONDUCT MATTERS

RESOLVED:

1. That the Monitoring Officer's clarification regarding the distinction between the conclusion of a Code of Conduct complaint and the continuing implementation of recommendations accepted by the Council be noted.

2. That Members note that the actions arising from the earlier Code of Conduct decision remain outstanding and may continue to be pursued by the Council.
3. That Members note the Monitoring Officer's advice that a failure to comply with an accepted recommendation may give rise to a separate complaint under paragraph 8.4 of the Code of Conduct.
4. That Members note the protection afforded to political expression under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, together with the responsibilities and limitations associated with exercising that right.

C1558. OUTCOME OF ELECTION

The Town Clerk advised Members that Barrington "Barry" James Hill would be elected uncontested to Ledbury West Ward with effect from 1 October 2026. Members were also advised that an election had been called in Ledbury South Ward and remained open for nominations.

RESOLVED:

That Members receive and note the above information.

C1559. TO CONSIDER PLANNING CONSULTATIONS

1. **Application No. 262054 – Replacement of rear concrete balcony - St Katherine's Hospital High Street Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1DZ**

RESOLVED:

No objection

2. **Application No. 262055 – Replacement of rear concrete balcony - St Katherine's Hospital High Street Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1DZ - Listed Building Consent.**

RESOLVED:

No objection

3. **Application No. 262507 – Change of use of therapy centre (Use Class E(e)) to dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) – reversion to residential use, the change of use having been permitted in 2014 – Lodge Cottage, The Homend, Ledbury, Herefordshire HR8 1AR**

RESOLVED:

No objection

4. **Application No. 262547** – Erection of a single dwelling (Use Class C3), repairs to boundary walls and associated soft and hard landscaping – **17–19 The Homend, Ledbury, Herefordshire HR8 1BN**

RESOLVED:

That this item be deferred to a future meeting of Council, subject to additional information being available.

C1560. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE UPDATE ON PLANNING DECISIONS

Councillor Harvey provided an update in relation to Planning Application 250297, Little Bush Pitch, noting that no decision had been made and that the matter had been referred back to the applicant.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the planning decisions be received and noted.

C1561. REPRESENTATION AT HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE

Councillor Harvey provided an update, advising Members that she had not received a revised date for the application relating to the left-hand side of the old Isaac Stores to return to the Herefordshire Council Planning Committee. Officers were considering the application in light of recent changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, and it was possible that this planning application may be determined by officers.

RESOLVED:

That Members note the update.

C1562. TO APPROVE THE EVENTS STRATEGY

Councillor Hughes highlighted the incorrect spelling of “Autumn” on page 7493.

It was explained that the Event Assessment Framework would provide a structured means of assessing proposed events and help determine whether an event should proceed or receive Council support.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the Events Strategy be approved.**

2. That officers, in consultation with the Events Working Party, be instructed to develop the supporting Implementation Plan and operational documents.
3. That progress against the Strategy and Action Plan be reported to Council quarterly.
4. That once completed the Strategy, Action Plan and Implementation Plan be reviewed annually to reflect available resources, community needs and opportunities for partnership working.

C1563. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FROM LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF A PROPOSED 3-YEAR PROJECT TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY WILDPLAY

RESOLVED:

That this item be deferred to a future meeting of Full Council to be held on 15 October 2026.

C1564. TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO QUOTES FOR UPDATING THE MAPS WITHIN THE TOWN'S NOTICE BOARD

It was highlighted that the requested images of the proposed map were missing from the report and, as Members wished to see these before committing expenditure, the item was deferred.

RESOLVED:

That this item be deferred to a future meeting of Full Council to be held on 15 October 2026.

C1565. CEMETERY

RESOLVED:

- i. That in accordance with Standing Order 23(a), authority be given for the Deed of Exclusive Right of Burial no. 822 to be signed, granting the exclusive right of burial to those named on the interment form.
- ii. That in accordance with Standing Order 23(a), authority be given for the Deeds of Exclusive Right of Burial nos. 484, 567 and 574 to be signed, granting the transfer of the exclusive right of burial to those named on each transfer request.

C1566. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2026 AND GIVE CONSIDERATION TO ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN

Members enquired whether the Council's purchase order/procurement protocol was available and whether staff were aware of the required process. It was confirmed that the protocol was in place and staff were aware of it.

It was confirmed that staff queries or concerns relating to staff matters should be raised with their line manager rather than with Members.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 3 September 2026 be received and noted.

C1567. MASEFIELD MATTERS

Members questioned the statement at minute 89 that the overall project remained within budget, noting that this did not clarify whether expenditure was in line with the forecast at the current stage of project delivery.

It was confirmed that Councillor Peberdy, Chair of the Masefield Matters Project Board, would attend the next meeting of Full Council on 15 October 2026 to provide a verbal update to Members.

Councillor Peberdy had provided a written response addressing issues raised by Councillor Morris at a previous meeting of Full Council. This would be circulated to Councillors in advance of the next Full Council meeting.

Councillor Hamblin thanked Councillor Wilkinson for her assistance in reviewing the project finances.

The Clerk was asked to clarify the current process for the approval and submission of progress reports to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Members wished to have sight of progress submissions before they were submitted.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the minutes of the meeting of the Masefield Matters Working Party held on 11 September 2026 be received and noted.**
- 2. That the Clerk was asked to clarify the current process for the approval and submission of progress reports to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Members wished to have sight of progress submissions before they were submitted.**
- 3. That the revised Terms of Reference for the Masefield Matters Project Board be approved, subject to the membership section making clear that each organisation**

may nominate a substitute representative to attend when its regular representative is unavailable.

C1568. OUTSIDE BODIES

- i. To receive and note the minutes of a meeting of the Ledbury Community Choir held on 4 September 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Ledbury Community Choir held on 4 September 2026 be received and noted, with it being highlighted that the Community Choir Christmas Concert is to be held on 21 December 2026 at Ledbury Rugby Club.

- ii. To receive and note the minutes of a meeting of Ledbury Carnival Association held on 9 September 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of Ledbury Carnival Association held on 9 September 2026 be received and noted, with recognition given to the success of the recent Carnival event.

C1569. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

To note that the date of the next meeting of Council is scheduled for Thursday, 15 October 2026 at 7:00 pm in the Ledbury Town Council Offices.

C1570. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public are excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

C1571. TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL RECEIVED FROM OMS (CURRENT IT PROVIDER) IN RESPECT OF CHANGES TO THEIR SERVICE PROVISION

RESOLVED:

1. That the additional information provided by OMSUK be received and noted.
2. That the Clerk be delegated authority to finalise and sign the agreement, subject to the matters listed within the report being satisfactorily resolved and the final terms remaining within the approved budget and scope of service.

**C1572. TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO ANY RECOMMENDATIONS
DEEMED URGENT CONSIDERED AT THE RESOURCES MEETING
ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2026**

None received.

The meeting ended at 8:54 pm.

Signed Dated
Chairman of the Council

Statements read by members of the public in relation to Planning Application 262052 – Land at Martins Way, Ledbury

Questions Provided by Victoria Booton

? Can the HC Council confirm whether ownership of the land behind the WWTP (Waterworks) was established before or after the 2025 site visit, and identify the documentary record on which that conclusion was based ?

— Additionally to this, did any documentary evidence exist in 2025 establishing that the land behind the WWTP was being retained for potential future expansion, and when was that information obtained? ? - We are asking that they establish chronology here = Simply put, we are asking WHY was it not possible to eliminate the site before a physical site assessment??

AND where is that chronology? !?

!!Evidence, or apparent lack of -!!

? Where are the written site assessments comparing the four sites identified in reports ? Please provide the evidential data !

!!Waterworks - ? What particular documents show that the WWTP land is required for future expansion, and importantly when did the Council obtain them !? - Again, addresses a chronological question ?

!!S106 funding!!

? What EXACT S106 wording connects the Platinum Way contribution specifically to Martins Way? Is there a publicly made available contract on file ?

!!A discrepancy in figures ?

? Why does your report state £63,500 when the Council's August 2025 decision records a sum of £72,940? — And why was £72,940 specifically allocated to Martins Way before the planning application had even been determined ?

NB* (Will additional funding be required to get the project over the line to completion - CAT - if so at how much cost to Ledbury taxpayers?)*

!!The "Survey"!!

I believe cite 640 responses..

Given that we have also located the raw data,

— ? We ask, of the 640(?) responses you have cited, how many SPECIFICALLY asked for a pump track !? - Why are there duplicate entries?

!!Back to the Waterworks!!

! Your report states that the land behind the WWTP was initially the preferred location. However, the Council's own 12 June 2025 record states that following a site walk of Martins Way Park and the Water Works Reserve, "The latter not preferred due to impact on trees and habitat" - So are you saying that the waterworks "reserve" (it is not officially designated as a reserve) site and the land BEHIND the waterworks site are the same site? - IF they are, how could it have been an initially preferred location !? — What/where PRECISELY was the land behind the WWTP that you describe as initially preferred? Where is it identified in the 2025 site assessment !? — Put simply — Which Council record is correct — that it was initially preferred, or that it was "not preferred due to impact on trees and habitat" !?

If the WWTP (Waterworks) was initially preferred as a site for the pump track, as you state, why were Martins Way plans already being developed by June 2025, according to your OWN records !?

!!Designers!!

? Why was Clarke & Kent LTD being brought into a design/build process before any planning approval, when a September 2025 report said a contractor would only be appointed subject to planning approval !? — If planning approval was supposed to come first, why was Clarke & Kent already involved beforehand !?

! S106 question !

? The August 2025 HCC decision says the 22 July community event cost £109.58, paid from the S106, leaving £72,830.42 — Why was S106 money used to fund the consultation event itself !?

!!HCC's decision says the working group included HCC/LTC ward members *(Cllrs Simmons, Peberdy and Harvey)* and was established to support the design concept through to delivery !? Who specifically authorised the working group to take the project through to delivery before planning permission had been determined !?

? It is stated that following initial selection of the site at Martins Way, public consultation was held, but if the site had already been selected before the "public" consultation, what exactly was the "public" being consulted on - the site, or just the design !?

? Can you identify where the residents immediately surrounding Martins Way, Villa Way, Biddulph Way and the neighbouring care home were SPECIFICALLY consulted about the potential impact of the proposed track?

For example we know the care-home residents were not specifically consulted, neither was the care home (manager stated not aware of plans)!! — WHY did you consider a flyer specifically aimed at kids, (when many adults may have been at work) a couple of ward newsletters and a general survey of a niche demographic age group sufficient consultation, rather than carrying out a proper consultation with neighbouring residents who could be directly affected by the proposal !? — put simply, where was any specific consultation with neighbouring residents on the potential impacts of the pump track - rather than a consultation aimed primarily at young people - before this stage of the process was reached ?

? Given that we know through research that Clarke & Kent have undertaken public consultations with communities on other pump track projects, WHY was a comparable consultation with neighbouring residents not carried out here and why were we not able to see any 3D renderings !?

Chris Thomas – Speech at Full Council Meeting 24/9/26

Planning Application P262052/F

Chair, Councillors, thank you for allowing me to speak.

I want to begin by making my position absolutely clear.

I support investment in facilities for children and young people. I support cycling, outdoor recreation and creating more opportunities for teenagers in Ledbury. I would actually love Ledbury to have a pump track.

The applicant cites responses from many young people and says this demonstrates demand for better parks, playgrounds, sports facilities and dedicated youth-focused spaces. That is important evidence, and it should not be dismissed. [1]

But evidence of a need for improved youth provision is not, by itself, evidence that this particular development, at this particular location, complies with planning policy.

My objection is not to a pump track in principle.

My objection is that the application has not demonstrated that the permanent change to part of Martins Way Park satisfies the relevant national, county and neighbourhood plan tests for the loss of public open space.

I ask councillors to concentrate on five matters:

1. The national planning policy framework openspace test;
2. Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy OS3;
3. Policy CL2.1 of the adopted Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan;
4. Herefordshire Council's own 2023 Open Space Assessment; and finally
5. Access and safety under NDP Policy TR1.2.

1.

"The Council's own Open Space Assessment 2023 summarises national planning policy protecting existing open space. The Assessment states that development affecting open space should only proceed where the space is surplus to requirements, replacement provision is made, or alternative recreational provision justifies the loss.

The same principle is reflected in the current 2026 National Planning Policy Framework's recognition that development proposals should not have a substantial adverse impact on existing recreational land and facilities."

2.

Paragraph 6.4 of the applicants Design and Access Statement accepts that the proposed development will result in the loss of open space contrary to Core Strategy Policy OS3, whilst asserting that it will provide an **equally beneficial facility**. [3] This is very important.

The Design and Access Statement identifies the park as approximately 9,850 square meters and the pump track as approximately 3,070 square meters (0.307 hectares) [3] . roughly one third. I would ask councilors to bear in mind that of the 9850 figure this includes areas of brambles, nettles, trees and hedgerows and other existing play equipment. That is not all relevant to calculating loss of open space as a percentage. A visual assessment by myself and other residents assess the loss of actual open space to be roughly 60%. This is a material difference.

3.

Policy CL2.1 of the Ledbury NDP protects open and green spaces and permits loss only where they are surplus to requirements or where benefits outweigh their visual, historic and community value. [4] This broadly aligns to national and county level policy.

Paragraphs 10.12 and 10.13 of the NDP state that these spaces contribute to recreation, health, wellbeing, amenity and quality of life for residents of **all ages** and that valued amenity land should be carefully assessed before loss is permitted. [4]

During the consultation phase, the NDP recorded survey evidence that 93% of respondents supported the protection, enhancement and extension of green infrastructure and 96% supported the protection of identified open spaces. [4] This is highly significant in the argument the applicant makes for providing equally beneficial facility. The two facts cannot be true at the same time so I ask councilors' to consider this point very carefully. In summary 97% of Ledbury residents surveyed in a much larger, more democratic process, do not want green space developed.

4.

The councils own Open Space Assessment 2023, and the new 2026 NPPF establishes a standard of at least three hectares of accessible greenspace per 1,000 people.

The assessment's specific Ledbury recommendation says that accessible greenspace in the town **falls well below the three-hectare standard at 1.44**. It recommends exploring the designation or creation of more amenity or natural and semi-natural greenspace offering informal play, running and quiet contemplation.

It also records that more than two-thirds of Ledbury's accessible greenspace comprises green corridors and chains (Town Trail and Riverside Park). This is important because it recognises much of our existing green space (within the 1.44) is of relatively poor quality for open play. In short we are already under indexed for exactly the type of open space the applicant wants to replace. **[Source: Open Space Assessment, Ledbury recommendations, page 155; Table 9.1, page 170.]**

However, the same assessment also identifies a need for new provision for children and young people along Ledbury's southern edge. I don't dispute that. **[Source: Open Space Assessment, Ledbury recommendations, page 155.]** [\[chapter 9 ...t 2023.pdf | PDF\]](#)

Both findings must be given weight.

There is evidence supporting additional youth provision.

But there is also evidence that Ledbury is below the accessible-green-space standard and needs more multifunctional amenity space, not less.

5.

Policy **TR1.2** of the NDP requires designs to provide a pedestrian-, cyclist- and mobility-vehicle-friendly environment; to provide for children's safety in play areas; to include appropriate off-site measures in travel plans; and to avoid indiscriminate on-street parking by providing adequate parking for visitors where appropriate. **[Source: Ledbury NDP, Policy TR1.2(e)–(h), page 76.]** [\[Ledbury ND...h 2023.pdf | PDF\]](#)

Paragraphs 11.10–11.12 reinforce that children's safety is paramount, active-travel connections should be direct and integrated, and existing parking problems should be addressed where development may intensify activity. **[Source: Ledbury NDP, paragraphs 11.10–11.12, page 77.]** [\[Ledbury ND...h 2023.pdf | PDF\]](#)

The submitted [Travel Plan](#) identifies traffic-free routes on shared pedestrian footpaths, suggested routes on suburban roads which are busy bus routes, near bus stops and waiting areas and many links where cyclists must dismount. It does not itself contain traffic counts, a parking survey, a forecast of drop-off activity or a child-focused risk assessment. **[Source: Travel Plan, drawing 178-ATOP100, dated 6 July 2026.]** [\[Travel Plan.pdf | PDF\]](#)

That does not prove the scheme is unsafe. It means the plan submitted is not, by itself, the detailed evidence needed to demonstrate that all requirements of Policy TR1.2 have been met.

Conclusion

The need for youth recreation has been demonstrated.

What has not been demonstrated is that the proposal satisfies the policy tests established by national policy, Core Strategy Policy OS3 or Policy CL2.1 and TR1.2 of the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan.

In summary:

The land has not been shown to be surplus.

Equivalent replacement open space is not being provided.

And the evidence does not clearly demonstrate that the benefits outweigh the loss of existing multifunctional public open space.

Thank you all for your time and if you have any questions I would be happy to take them now.

Footnotes

[1] Design and Access Statement – youth consultation evidence (630 responses). Reference: turn7search23.

[2] chapters_1_-_4_open_space_assessment_2023.pdf – national open-space policy test and greenspace standards. Reference: turn7search39.

[3] Design and Access Statement – OS3 statement, site area and park area. Reference: turn7search23.

[4] Ledbury NDP March 2023 – Policy CL2.1, paragraphs 10.12–10.13, and consultation evidence (93% / 96%). Reference: turn7search45.

[5] chapter_9_open_space_assessment_2023.pdf – Ledbury recommendations and accessible greenspace evidence. Reference: turn7search42.

[6] Travel Plan.pdf – active travel routes and access information. Reference: turn7search47.

AGENDA ITEM: 6

FULL COUNCIL

Minute No.	Action	To be Actioned by	Date Actioned	Comments	Status	Estimated Completion
13 November 2025						
C1044(5)	Officers to prepare a draft long-term plan concerning all heritage buildings owned by the council.	OM	26.08.2026	Meeting with Al Braithwaite arranged to discuss this and various other matters 18.06.2026 - further meeting arranged for 27.08.2026	In Progress	Dec 2026/Jan 2027
02 April 2026						
C1239.2	RFO to review ethical banking accounts and provide a report to Council.	TC	TBC	To be investigated following April/May year end -report to be provided to future meeting of council - will be undertaken by Finance & Governance Manager once recruited - due to high workload of Clerk/RFO	In progress	Autumn 2026
14 May 2026 - Annual Council Meeting						
C1349.2	That a working group be set up to review the Council's Corporate Plan.	TC		Date to be identified for early 2027	in progress	Feb-27
25 June 2026						
C1417	That officers be instructed to undertake a detailed appraisal regarding the potential office relocation of the operational costs, benefits, disbenefits and risks associated with each of the five options outlined within the report, with a further report being presented to a future meeting of council	TC	Nov-26	It had been anticipated that this report would be available for the 24 September meeting. However, due to further information being required to be included in the report this will now be presented to Members at the meeting scheduled for 5 November 2026	In progress	Nov-26
16 July 2026						

C1438	That the Resources Committee consider the approach from the outside organisation at a future meeting.	Resources	03.09.2026	To be considered at a future meeting of Resources	In progress	Sep-26
06 August 2026						
C1490	Charter Market TRO - Clerk to commence discussions with Hereford Council regarding the statutory process required to reduce the extent of the Market Day Traffic TRO.	TC	Aug-26	Conversation started and plan being drawn up to be provided with specific details of site	In progress	Sep-26
C1490	Charter Market TRO - Market Layout - The Town Clerk is to work with Hereford Council officers to prepare a detailed plan showing the revised boundary and associated market layout for members' approval before being submitted.	TC	Sep-26	See above	In progress	Sep-26
C1499	Masefield Matters Financial Position - Members are to be provided with a detailed financial breakdown of the project including a forecast to project completion showing how funds will be allocated against outstanding expenditure supported by a covering report.	TC + EC	Sep-26	Project coordinator working on financial breakdown etc. TC to provide covering report once received - Clerk review detailed breakdown undertaken by Cllr Wilkinson	In progress	Oct-26
03 SEPTEMBER 2026						
C1513(2)	Following the Locality Steward's return from annual leave, arrange a meeting between the Town Clerk and Locality Steward to discuss the reported highway/maintenance issues and provide the outcome to Full Council.	TC	Nov-26	Meeting to be arranged following Clerk's leave	In progress	Nov-26
C1513(3)	Consider whether any of the works raised by Members/public regarding weeding and maintenance around Ledbury can be undertaken through the Lengthsman Scheme.	Operations Manager	Sept/Oct 2026	Operations Manager to consider and put in place. All appropriate works are being passed to the Lengthsman to deal with.	Complete	Sept/Oct 2026
C1515	Implement the budget monitoring actions identified under Minute C1515, including the required transfers/reallocations to Earmarked Reserves, General Reserve, Phased Staff Review Costs and Councillor Training budget lines.	AC	Sep-26	Accounts Clerk on annual leave until end of September amendments to be made prior to close down of month 5	In progress	Sep-26
C1517	Provide a breakdown of invoice totals in future Full Council agendas, with reference to the relevant reports.	AC	Ongoing	Accounts Clerk to be advised on return from annual leave that this will be required alongside regular budget monitoring reports	In progress	On-going

C1521(2)	Publish the press release regarding the three shortlisted Masefield Memorial designers together with a report outlining the selection process undertaken to date, the process going forward and details of the due diligence undertaken in respect of the three designers.	EC	18.09.2026	Press release prepared - awaiting approval from NLHF	In progress	18.09.2026
C1530(2)	Provide quarterly progress updates on the TEMAP markets delivery, with the first update establishing the baseline and reporting delivery against the agreed milestones and timings.	TC	Dec-26	Report to be provided on december meeting	In progress	17.12.2026
C1534	Arrange a meeting of Councillors, chaired by Councillor Chowns, to consider the Town and Parish Council Survey 2026 and prepare a draft response for submission to Full Council.	Operations Manager	Oct-26	Operations Manager has contacted Cllr Chowns with a view to dealing with the survey, prior to its submission on 14/10/2026.	In Progress	14.10.2026
C1542	Provide further information regarding the request for an additional memorial at Ledbury Cemetery, including addressing the issues raised under Minute C1505, for consideration by Full Council.	OM / AC	15.10.2026	Further report to be provided at FC meeting 05.11.2026	In progress	05.11.2026
C1542(2)	Arrange a meeting with local funeral directors and memorial masons to discuss the Council's cemetery rules and regulations and ensure that the information is being appropriately shared with families.	Operations Manager	Oct/Nov 2026	Two meetings have been arranged to meet with Ledbury Co-Op Funerals on 13/10/26 and Ledbury Funerals on 14/10/26. Further meetings to be arranged.	In progress	Oct/Nov 2026
24 SEPTEMBER 2026						
C1551	Submit an objection to Herefordshire Council in respect of Planning Application 262052 – Land at Martins Way, Ledbury, setting out the factual planning grounds agreed by Full Council, including residential proximity and amenity, drainage and water run-off, lack of toilet and parking provision, future maintenance and ownership, health and safety, continued availability of the site for emergency air ambulance landings, noise, the quality of the application, and consideration of NDP Policies CL1.1, CL2.1, OS3 and TR1.2.	Clerk	02/10/2026	The Administrative Assistant to the Clerk submitted the response by email on 02/10/2026.	Complete	02/10/2026
C1554(i)	Revisit the £200 grant awarded to Ledbury Rainbows once the Council's Grants process has been reviewed.	Clerk			Pending	Sep-26

C1555(1)	Purchase the BeamZ SNOW5000 Professional Snow Machine and BeamZ B2500 Professional Bubble Machine at a combined cost of £958.99 to support future Council events and possible hire by organisations.	Officers	24/09/2026	Both items of equipment have been ordered.	Complete	05/10/2026
C1555(2)	Prepare and present a report to a future Full Council meeting setting out a proposed hire policy and costings for the Snow and Bubble Machines.	Clerk	24/09/2026		In Progress	Dec-26
C1555(3)	Confirm the budget line from which the purchase of the BeamZ SNOW5000 Professional Snow Machine and BeamZ B2500 Professional Bubble Machine will be funded.	Clerk	24/09/2026		In Progress	Nov-26
C1562(2)	Develop the Events Strategy Implementation Plan and supporting operational documents, in consultation with the Events Working Party.	Officers / Events Working Party	24/09/2026		In Progress	Spring 2027
C1567(2)	Clarify the current process for the approval and submission of Masefield Matters progress reports to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, including how Members will be given sight of progress submissions before they are submitted.	Clerk	24/09/2026		In progress	Nov-26
C1567(3)	Amend the Masefield Matters Project Board Terms of Reference so that the membership section makes clear that each organisation may nominate a substitute representative to attend when its regular representative is unavailable.	Clerk / Project Board	24/09/2026		In progress	Nov-26
C1571	Finalise and sign the OMSUK service agreement, subject to the matters listed within the report being satisfactorily resolved and the final terms remaining within the approved budget and scope of service.	Clerk	24/09/2026		In progress	End Oct 26

FULL COUNCIL	15 OCTOBER 2026	AGENDA ITEM: 14i
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Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to ask Members to approve the attached amended Training and Development Policy as per the recommendation from the Resources Committee held on 3 September 2026.

Detailed Information

The Council's Training and Development Policy sets out its commitment to supporting the training and development of employees and councillors. It covers:

- statutory, occupational and vocational training;
- the identification and approval of training;
- training budgets and associated costs;
- study leave and facilities;
- appeals and the potential repayment of training costs; and
- the recording and evaluation of training undertaken.

As with all policies it should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains appropriate, reflects current legislation and is consistent with the Council's staffing structure, governance arrangements and working practices.

The current policy contains references to roles and arrangements that no longer reflect the Council's current structure, including responsibilities allocated to the Deputy Clerk and decisions referred to the Resources Committee.

The Resources Committee were provided with an amended Training and Development Policy for consideration which took into account changes following the staff review and which reflect the staff structure.

The review also provided an opportunity to consider whether the policy was robust enough and sufficiently clear regarding:

- how training needs are identified and prioritised;
- the respective responsibilities of employees, line managers and the Town Clerk;
- the approval of vocational or higher-cost training;
- the circumstances in which training costs may be recovered;
- the provision and recording of councillor training; and
- the monitoring of the effectiveness of the Council's investment in training and development.

A copy of the existing Training and Development Policy is attached for Members' consideration and includes suggested amendments shown as track changes for ease of identification, along with a new amended version.

Financial Implications

Training and development expenditure must be met from the relevant approved budget. Any additional expenditure that cannot be accommodated within the existing budget would require approval in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and agreed governance arrangements.

Legal and Policy Implications

The Council has a responsibility to ensure that employees and staff receive the training necessary to undertake their duties safely, competently and effectively.

Training opportunities must be provided fairly and consistently, having regard to the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant employment and health and safety legislation.

Any provisions relating to the recovery of training costs should be reasonable, clearly communicated and supported by an appropriate written agreement where applicable.

Recommendation

1. That Members approve the amended Training and Development Policy as recommended by the Resources Committee.
2. That Members agree that the policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if there is a relevant change in legislation or Council arrangements.



LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Date Adopted: 19 September 2024
Next Review: 17 September 2026

LEDBURY
TOWN COUNCIL
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- *Equal Opportunities Policy*
- *Agile Working Policy*

Ledbury Town Council is committed to providing effective and efficient services to residents and visitors. The Council recognises that appropriate training and development are essential to ensuring that employees and councillors have the knowledge, skills and confidence required to undertake their respective roles effectively.

Ledbury Town Council recognises that its most important resource is its employees and councillors, and is committed to encouraging both to enhance their knowledge and qualifications through further training.

Training courses, which will benefit the Council, provide relevant development opportunities and enable employees and councillors to perform their duties and responsibilities efficiently and effectively will be prioritised.

The Council will look proactively at offering financial assistance to support appropriate training and development programmes.

Councillors will be provided with opportunities at induction and throughout their term of office to become familiar with changes to legislation, their roles and responsibilities as councillors and to develop themselves in order to better support the community they serve.

Employee training needs may be identified through induction, supervision meetings, appraisals, changes to job descriptions or responsibilities, changes in legislation or working practices, and formal or informal discussions between employees and their line managers. Training needs will be considered by the relevant manager in consultation with the Town Clerk.

Equality

The Council will provide access to training and development fairly and consistently. No employee or councillor will be treated less favourably because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to enable disabled employees and councillors to participate in training.

These are the protected characteristics specified by the [Equality Act 2010](#).

PROCEDURE

1. Training Categories

Mandatory and statutory training – Training required by legislation, regulation, the Council's policies, risk assessments or the requirements of an employee's role. This may include induction, health and safety, data protection, safeguarding and other role-specific training.

The policy should avoid suggesting that councillors can generally be compelled to undertake statutory training. Instead:

Councillors will be strongly encouraged to undertake induction and other training relevant to their roles, including Code of Conduct, planning and chairmanship training where applicable.

Occupational – Occupational training is that which is required in order to acquire and refresh the skills needed to carry out particular roles which form part of the employee's job profile or a role which they will undertake in the near future. There may be some occupational training required for councillors who undertake specific duties, such as appraisal training, chairing skills, understanding planning legislation or other requirements that the council needs to comply with in its role as employer.

Vocational – Vocational training is that which is not necessarily required for the role, but may be deemed useful as the skills, knowledge and qualifications obtained will add to the development of the employee or councillors if not covered by statutory or occupational training.

2. Training Facilities and Study Leave

Subject to prior approval, employees may be permitted to attend training during working hours, undertake agreed distance learning and use Council facilities for study. Any study time, study leave or homeworking arrangements must be agreed in advance with the employee's line manager and the Town Clerk, having regard to operational requirements and the relevance of the qualification to the employee's role.

The Clerk will arrange for Councillors to be booked onto relevant training as agreed through their induction programme or requested throughout their term of office.

3. Training Budgets

The Town Clerk is responsible for managing employee and councillor training within the approved budget. Training required for an employee's existing role may be approved by the Town Clerk, following a recommendation from the relevant line manager.

Requests for vocational training or qualifications involving a significant financial or operational commitment will be referred to Full Council where they cannot be accommodated within the approved budget or the Town Clerk's delegated authority.

Any request for additional budget provision must be considered by Full Council in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

When preparing the budget for an election year, appropriate provision will be considered for the induction and training of newly elected or returning councillors.

4. Costs and attendance outside normal hours

The Council will meet the cost of reasonable expenses for:

- Where training is mandatory or has been approved by the Council, attendance during an employee's normal working hours will be treated as working time. Any arrangements for training outside of normal working hours including payment of or accrual of time off in lieu, must be agreed in advance.
- Health and Safety training should normally take place during working hours and be provided without cost to the employee.
- Course and examination fees (noting that failure to attend a pre-booked course may result in the employee paying towards the cost of the course).
- Travel costs, either by public transport or use of own transport in line with the terms and conditions set out in the National Joint Council Local Government Services Pay and Conditions of Service. Employees and councillors should use the most cost-effective reasonable means of travel, having regard to journey time, accessibility, safety and practicality.
- Where an employee or councillor is unable to attend pre-booked training, they must notify the Council as soon as possible. The Council may consider recovering avoidable costs where the absence was without reasonable explanation, provided that any recovery from an employee is lawful and has been agreed in writing.

5. Study Material

- Any essential reading material purchased by the Council will remain the property of the Council and must be returned to the Council at the end of the training course. Failure to do so will result in the employee being charged full replacement costs.

6. Examinations

Reasonable study leave may be granted before an examination where this has been agreed as part of the approval for the course. The amount of paid or unpaid study leave will be determined by the Town Clerk, taking account of the course requirements, operational needs and consistency with arrangements for other employees.

7. Requesting Training

All staff have the right to request training and each case will be considered on its own merit.

- The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that all staff receive statutory training and attend all the appropriate refresher courses
- Requests must be made in writing to the employee's line manager who will forward them to the Town Clerk for consideration
- Requests for vocational training **MUST** be approved by the Resources Committee

8. Appeals

An employee whose training request is declined may request a review of the decision in writing within ten working days, setting out the reasons for the review.

Where the original decision was made by a line manager, the review will be undertaken by the Town Clerk. Where the original decision was made by the Town Clerk, the review will be considered under the Council's appropriate staffing or grievance arrangements. The outcome of the review will be final.

9. Repayment of Training Costs

Where the Council agrees to fund a voluntary qualification or development programme involving a significant financial commitment, the employee may be required to enter into a written training repayment agreement before the course begins.

The agreement will specify:

- the costs funded by the Council;
- the circumstances in which repayment may be required;
- the period following completion of the training during which the repayment provisions will apply; and
- a proportionate sliding scale reducing the amount repayable over time.

10. Subject to the terms of the written agreement, repayment may be required where the employee:

- voluntarily leaves the Council's employment before completing the training;
- voluntarily leaves within the repayment period specified in the agreement;
- is dismissed for misconduct during the course or within the specified repayment period; or
- fails to complete the training without a reasonable explanation.

Repayment will not normally be sought where:

- the training is mandatory, statutory or required for health and safety purposes;
- the employee is unable to complete the training for reasons outside their control;

- the Council terminates the employee's employment by reason of redundancy, ill health or another reason unrelated to misconduct;
- the Council requires the employee to discontinue the training; or
- recovery would be unreasonable or unlawful.

The Council may waive or reduce the amount repayable where there are exceptional circumstances.

No deduction will be made from salary or final pay unless it is permitted by the employee's contract or separately authorised by the employee in writing before the training begins. Any deduction must comply with relevant employment legislation and National Minimum Wage requirements.

11. Records and Evaluation

A record of training undertaken by employees and councillors will be maintained in accordance with the Council's data protection and records-management requirements. Copies of relevant employee certificates will be retained securely on the employee's personnel file.

Employees and councillors may be asked to provide feedback on the relevance, quality and effectiveness of training. Where appropriate, employees will be expected to share relevant learning with colleagues.

The Town Clerk will report annually to Council on training undertaken, expenditure against budget, identified training needs and the overall effectiveness of the Council's training programme.

FULL COUNCIL	15 OCTOBER 2026	AGENDA ITEM: 14ii
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Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY REVIEW

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to explain the principal suggested amendments to the Dignity at Work Policy and to ask Members to approve the amended policy.

Members should note that the Council's policy wording has been amended. The externally sourced Civility & Respect guidance has not been changed.

Detailed Information

The following report was provided to a meeting of the Resources Committee held on 24 September 2026.

The attached policy has been reviewed to improve legal accuracy, clarify how concerns should be reported and handled, and give clearer protection to employees and others involved in a complaint. The amendments do not alter the Council's underlying commitment to a workplace in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Summary of amendments

Equality wording: The equality statement now lists the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 accurately. Political opinion and trade union membership are retained as separate grounds on which unfair treatment will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment prevention: The policy records the employer's statutory duty, in force since 26 October 2024, to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment. It also commits the Council to risk assessment, proportionate preventative measures, information, training and review.

Definitions and legal test: Bullying and harassment are defined separately. The revised harassment wording reflects the Equality Act test and explains that intention is not decisive; the recipient's perception, the circumstances and whether the effect was reasonable must all be considered.

Complaints made in good faith: A complaint will not lead to action merely because it is not upheld or cannot be proved. Action may be considered only where there is evidence of a knowingly false allegation, deliberate misleading of an investigation or other bad faith.

Reporting routes and conflicts: The policy now gives a consistent route for raising concerns with a line manager or the Town Clerk, with alternatives where the complaint concerns the Clerk, the Chair or anyone who has a conflict of interest.

Councillor conduct: The distinction between employment responsibilities and the Code of Conduct process is clarified. Possible Code breaches are referred to the Monitoring Officer, while the Council may still take reasonable steps as an employer to protect health, safety and wellbeing and manage working arrangements.

Third parties and contractors: The policy strengthens protection from conduct by Councillors, contractors, suppliers, service users and members of the public. Contractor action must be proportionate, justified and taken in accordance with the relevant contract rather than on suspicion alone.

Confidentiality and outcomes: The wording replaces promises of strict confidentiality with a need-to-know approach that allows a fair investigation and compliance with legal duties. Complainants will be told whether a complaint is upheld, partly upheld or not upheld, but confidential disciplinary details may be withheld.

Disciplinary process: The revised wording explains when a matter may proceed under the disciplinary procedure and permits an existing investigation to be used where practicable, provided the employee is informed and a fair process is maintained.

Points to note

The externally sourced guidance section remains unchanged. Before the revised policy is published, the tracked draft should receive a final proofread to correct minor typographical and spacing issues, ensure references to the Monitoring Officer are consistent and set a new review date.

Recommendation

That Members approve the revised Dignity at Work Policy as per the recommendation from the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 24 September 2026.



LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

Date Adopted: March 2023
Next Review: March 2025 (Overdue)

DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

Ledbury Town Council believes that civility and respect are important in the working environment, and expects all councillors, officers, and the public to be polite and courteous when working for, and with the council.

Equality

In applying this policy, the Council will not unlawfully discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. The Council will also not tolerate unfair treatment on other grounds, including political opinion or trade union membership.

Purpose

Ledbury Town Council is committed to creating a working environment where all council employees, Councillors, contractors, and others who come into contact with us in the course of our work, are treated with dignity, respect, and courtesy. We aim to create a workplace where there is zero tolerance for harassment and bullying.

In support of this objective, Ledbury Town Council has signed up to the Civility Pledge, as a commitment to civility and respect in our work, and politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Further information about the Civility and Respect Pledge is available [NALC](#) & [SLCC](#).

We recognise that there is a continuum where unaddressed issues have the potential to escalate and become larger, more complex issues and this policy sets out how concerns will be managed however the emphasis of this policy is on resolution and mediation where appropriate, rather than an adversarial process.

This document:

- explains how we will respond to complaints of bullying or harassment.
- ensures that we respond sensitively and promptly; and,
- supports our employees in ensuring their behaviour does not amount to bullying and/or harassment by giving examples.

Since 26 October 2024, employers have been under a statutory duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment, rather than responding only after it occurs. A tribunal may increase compensation by up to 25% where an employer is found to have breached that duty.

Scope

This policy covers bullying and harassment of and by the Clerk and all employees engaged to work at Ledbury Town Council. Should agency staff, or contractors have a complaint connected to their engagement with Ledbury Town Council this should be raised to their nominated contact, manager, or the Chair of the Council, in the first instance. Should the complaint be about the Chair of the council the complaint should be raised to the resources committee.

Agency workers and contractors are expected to treat Council employees, Councillors, representatives and stakeholders with dignity and respect. Where concerns arise, the Council will consider the circumstances and take appropriate action in accordance with the relevant contractual arrangements. This may include requiring the removal of an individual from Council work or terminating the contract where justified.

Complaints about other employment matters will be managed under the council's grievance policy.

It is noted that the management of a situation may differ depending on who the allegations relate to some behaviour, such as assault, stalking, threats or harassment falling within criminal legislation, may constitute a criminal offence and may be reported to police. However, the council will take appropriate action if any of its employees are bullied or harassed by employees, Councillors, members of the public, suppliers or contractors.

The position on bullying and harassment

All staff and council representatives are entitled to dignity, respect, and courtesy within the workplace and to not experience any form of discrimination. Ledbury Town Council will not tolerate bullying or harassment in our workplace or at work-related events outside of the workplace, whether the conduct is a one-off act or repeated course of conduct, and whether harm is intended or not. Neither will we tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying. You should also be aware that, if you have bullied or harassed someone (e.g., physical violence, harassment), in some circumstances the treatment may amount to a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

We expect all representatives of the council to treat each other with respect and uphold the values of the code of conduct, civility and respect pledge, Equal Opportunities Policy, and all other policies and procedures set by the Council.

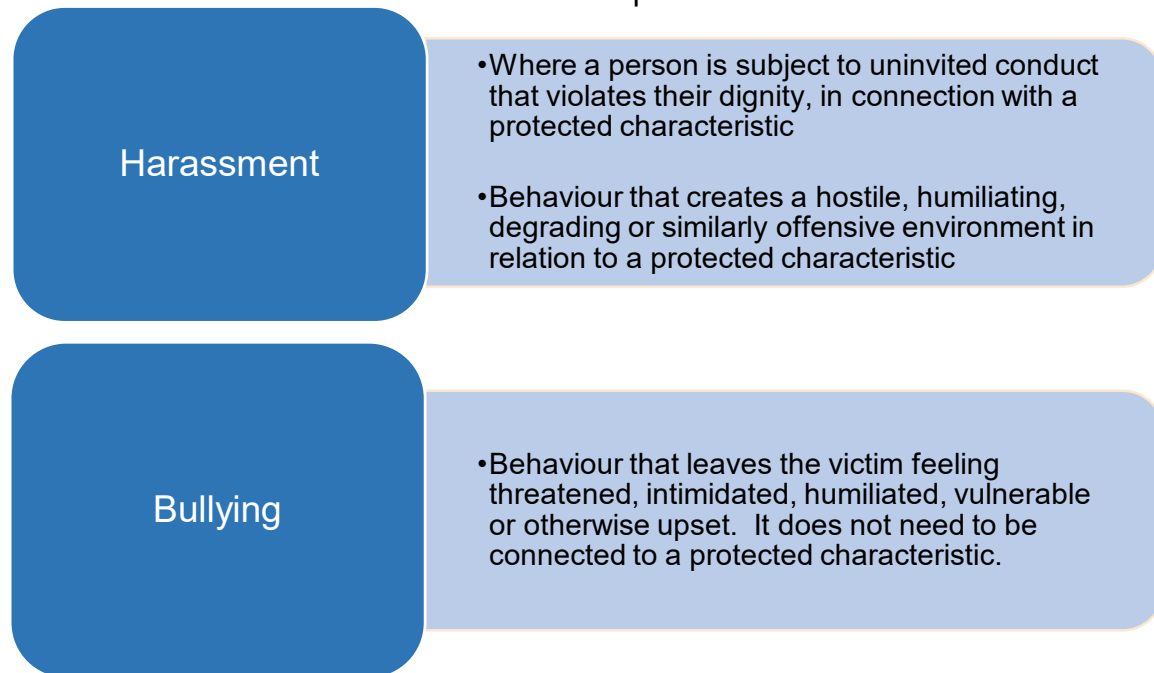
We expect you to demonstrate respect by listening and paying attention to others, having consideration for other people's feelings, following protocols and rules, showing appreciation and thanks, and being kind.

Allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously. Investigations will be carried out promptly, sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. See the grievance policy for further details regarding the process. Employees and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result.

A complaint will not result in action against the person raising it merely because it is not upheld or because there is insufficient evidence to reach a finding. However, where there is evidence that a person knowingly made a false allegation, deliberately misled an investigation or otherwise acted in bad faith, the matter may be considered under the Council's disciplinary procedure or another appropriate procedure.

The Council recognises its legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the course of employment. It will assess relevant risks, take

proportionate preventative action,, provide appropriate information and training, and review the effectiveness of the measures in place.



What Type of Treatment amounts to Bullying or Harassment?

Bullying is unwanted behaviour from an individual or group that is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting, or an abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates or causes physical or emotional harm to another person. Bullying may be a single serious incident or a pattern of behaviour.

Harassment under the Equality Act 2010 is unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Sexual harassment and less favourable treatment arising from a person's response to sexual harassment are also prohibited.

Examples of bullying and harassment include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- The offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances e.g., promotion, access to training
- Threats for rejecting sexual advances
- Demeaning comments about a person's appearance
- Verbal abuse or offensive comments, including jokes or pranks related to age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex, or sexual orientation
- Unwanted nicknames, especially related to a person's age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- Lewd or suggestive comments or gestures
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations, work activities or social activities.

- Withholding information a person needs in order to do their job
- Practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or inappropriate birthday rituals
- Physical abuse such as hitting, pushing, or jostling
- Rifling through, hiding, or damaging personal property
- Display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person
- Isolation or non-cooperation at work
- Subjecting a person to humiliation or ridicule, belittling their efforts, whether directly and / or in front of others
- The use of obscene gestures
- Abusing a position of power

This list is not exhaustive.

Bullying and harassment can occur through verbal and face-face interactions but can also take place through sharing inappropriate or offensive content in writing or via email and other electronic communications and social media.

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person finds acceptable may be unacceptable to another. Conduct may amount to harassment even where there was no intention to cause offence and even where the recipient has not previously asked for it to stop. In determining whether conduct had the effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, the Council will consider the recipient's perception, the circumstances of the case and whether it was reasonable for the conduct to have that effect. Some conduct, such as unwanted sexual touching, is likely to be clearly unacceptable without any prior warning being required.

Harassment can also occur where the unwanted behaviour relates to a perceived characteristic (such as offensive jokes or comments based on the assumption someone is gay, even if they are not) or due to their association with someone else (such as harassment related to their partner having a disability for example). See the council's equality and diversity Policy.

All employees must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity and should feel able to challenge behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.

It is important to recognise that bullying does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. Constructive and fair feedback about your behaviour or performance from your manager or colleagues/Councillors is not bullying. It is part of normal employment and management routines and should not be interpreted as anything different.

Victimisation

Victimisation is subjecting a person to a detriment because they have, in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or

harassing them or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload.

Provided that you act in good faith, i.e., you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment and the council will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation, which may include disciplinary action against anyone found to have victimised you.

Making a complaint that you know to be untrue, or giving evidence that you know to be untrue, may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

Reporting Concerns

Concerns should normally be raised with the employee's line manager or the Town Clerk. Where the concern involves the line manager, it should be raised with the Town Clerk. Where the concern involves the Town Clerk, it should be raised with the Chair of the Council. Where the concern involves the Chair of the Council, or where the Chair has a conflict of interest, it should be raised with the Resources Committee or the Vice-Chair of the Council. Where any person who would normally receive or manage a concern is involved in the allegations, may be a material witness or otherwise has a conflict of interest, another appropriate and impartial person or panel will be appointed.

What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a member of the public or supplier (as opposed to a colleague)

If you are being bullied or harassed by someone with whom you come into contact at work, you should raise the issue in accordance with the reporting arrangements set out above. Any such report will be taken seriously, and we will decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you.

What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a councillor:

Where allegations concern the conduct of a Councillor, any allegation that may amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct will be referred to the Monitoring Office. The Council will not investigate or determine whether the Councillor has breached the Code.

This does not prevent the Council, acting as an employer, from considering what reasonable measures are necessary to protect an employee's health, safety and wellbeing, manage working arrangements or address any separate grievance concerning the Council's response and duty of care. These employment measures must not be presented as finding a sanction against the councillor.

What you should do if you witness an incident you believe to be harassment or bullying: The Council will take reasonable steps to protect employees from bullying, harassment and sexual harassment by third parties, including Councillors, contractors, suppliers, service users and members of the public. Measures may include setting standards of behaviour, issuing warnings, restricting contact or access, changing

communication arrangements, reporting potentially criminal conduct and taking action under other relevant policies.

If you witness behaviour that you believe may amount to bullying or harassment, you should report the incident to the Town Clerk. If the concern involves the Town Clerk, it should be reported in accordance with the alternative reporting arrangements set out in this policy. The matter will be taken seriously. Information will be shared only with those who need it for the purpose of managing the concern, conducting a fair investigation, obtaining professional advice or complying with a legal obligation. Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, as the person responding to the allegations will normally need sufficient information to understand and answer them.

What you should do if you are being bullied or harassed by another member of staff: If you are being bullied or harassed by a colleague or contractor, there are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal. These are described below.

Informal resolution

If you are being bullied or harassed, you may be able to resolve the situation yourself by explaining clearly to the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to the council's policy and must stop. Alternatively, you may wish to ask the clerk/chief officer, your nominated manager, or a colleague to put this on your behalf or to be with you when confronting the perpetrator(s).

If the above approach does not work or if you do not want to try to resolve the situation in this way, or if you are being bullied by your own nominated manager, you are advised to raise the issue with the Chair of the council. (If your concern relates to the Chair, you are advised to raise it with the Chair of the personnel/staffing committee). The Chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss with you the option of trying to resolve the situation informally by telling the alleged perpetrator, without prejudicing the matter, that:

- there has been a complaint that their behaviour is having an adverse effect on a member of the council staff
- such behaviour is contrary to our policy
- for employees, the continuation of such behaviour could amount to a serious disciplinary offence

It may be possible for this conversation to take place with the alleged perpetrator without revealing your name, if this is what you want. The person dealing with it will also stress that the conversation is confidential.

In certain circumstances we may be able to involve a neutral third party (a mediator) to facilitate a resolution of the problem. The Chair (or another appropriate person) will discuss this with you if it is appropriate.

If your complaint is resolved informally, the alleged perpetrator(s) will not usually be subject to disciplinary sanctions. However, in exceptional circumstances (such as an extremely serious allegation or in cases where a problem has happened before) we may decide to investigate further and take more formal action notwithstanding that you raised the matter informally. We will consult with you before taking this step.

Raising a formal complaint

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint about bullying and harassment through the council's grievance procedure. In this case you **MUST** raise your complaint to the clerk or the Chair of the council. A formal complaint may ultimately lead to disciplinary action against the perpetrator(s) where they are employed.

The clerk or the Chair of the council will appoint someone to investigate your complaint in line with the grievance policy. You will need to co-operate with the investigation and provide the following details (if not already provided):

- The name of the alleged perpetrator(s),
- The nature of the harassment or bullying,
- The dates and times the harassment or bullying occurred,
- The names of any witnesses and
- Any action taken by you to resolve the matter informally.

The alleged perpetrator(s) would normally need to be told your name and the details of your grievance in order for the issue to be investigated properly. However, we will carry out the investigation as confidentially and sensitively as possible. Where you and the alleged perpetrator(s) work in proximity to each other, we will consider whether it is appropriate to make temporary adjustments to working arrangements whilst the matter is being investigated.

Where your complaint relates to potential breaches of the Code of Conduct for Members,, these will need to be investigated by the Monitoring Officer. The council will consider any adjustments to support you in your work and to manage the relationship with the councillor the allegations relate to, while the investigation proceeds.

Investigations will be carried out promptly (without unreasonable delay), sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. When carrying out any investigations, we will ensure that individuals' personal data is handled in accordance with the data protection policy.

The council will consider how to protect your health and wellbeing whilst the investigation is taking place and discuss this with you. Depending on the nature of the allegations, the Investigator may want to meet with you to better understand your complaint (see the grievance policy for further information, and details of your right to be accompanied).

After the investigation, a panel will meet with you to consider the complaint and the findings of the investigation in accordance with the grievance procedure. At the meeting you may be accompanied by a fellow worker or a trade union official.

Following the conclusion of the hearing the panel will write to you to inform you of the decision and to notify you of your right to appeal. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome and wish to appeal you **MUST** put your appeal in writing explaining the

reasons why you are dissatisfied with the decision. Your appeal will be heard under the appeal process that is described in the grievance procedure.

The use of the Disciplinary Procedure

Where an investigation indicates that there may be a disciplinary case to answer, the matter may proceed under the Council's disciplinary procedure. Where practicable, the investigation already undertaken may be used for that purpose. Provided the employee is informed and the requirements of a fair disciplinary process are met.

The complainant will be informed whether the complaint has been upheld, partly upheld, or not upheld and, where appropriate, of any general steps taken to address the matter. The Council may be unable to disclose confidential details or disciplinary action relating to another employee.

This is a non-contractual policy and procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

GUIDANCE FOR USING THE DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

The Dignity at Work Policy will replace a previous 'Bullying and Harassment' Policy, to create a policy that is focussed on encompassing behaviours beyond simply bullying and harassment, and zero tolerance with the aim of dealing with concerns before they escalate. It is important that any commitment made in the policy is applied in practice.

Wording has been suggested to demonstrate a council's commitment to promoting dignity and respect where they have signed up to the NALC, SLCC and OVV Civility and Respect Pledge.

The policy is drafted with consideration of employment language and terminology that is reflective of a modern working environment, setting a tone that is engaging, collaborative and inclusive. A council may want to update references where relevant to reflect local terminology and structure, however, should be considerate of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The examples of bullying and harassment are just that – examples. This should not be considered an exhaustive list.

Notes:

Protected Characteristics

A 'protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and marriage and civil partnership. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual because of any of the protected characteristics.

Discrimination includes treating people differently because of a protected characteristic. Employees can complain of harassment even if the behaviour in question is not directed at them. This is because the complainant does not actually need to possess the relevant protected characteristic. An employee can complain of unlawful harassment if they are related someone with a protected characteristic, or because a colleague believes they have a protected characteristic.

Examples of harassment related to a protected characteristic could include;

- Making assumptions about someone's ability due to their **age** or denying development opportunities to someone based on their age. This could also include assumptions about their lifestyle or making inappropriate jokes related to age.
- Making fun or mimicking impairments related to a health condition or using inappropriate language about disabilities. Constantly selecting social activities that make it impossible for a colleague with a **disability** to participate in.
- Refusing to treat a person as their new gender, or disclosing information about their gender identity could be harassment on the grounds of **gender reassignment**.
- **Pregnancy/Maternity** harassment could include refusing opportunities due to pregnancy or maternity leave, or inappropriate touching and invasion of personal space such as unwanted touching of a pregnant person's stomach.

- Harassment based on **race** could include derogatory nicknames, or stereotyping based on ethnicity. It could include racist comments or jokes, or assumptions about someone's lifestyle based on their ethnicity.
- **Gender** harassment could include not considering people for a job based on gender stereotyping roles or implementing practices that disadvantage one gender over another. Rude, explicit jokes, even if not directed at an individual, or comments on individuals dress or appearance.
- Regularly arranging team meals over periods of fasting or religious occasions or failing to adjust a dress code to accommodate religious dress could be examples of harassment based on **religion/belief**.
- Excluding same sex partners from social events could be both **sexual orientation** and **marriage/civil partnership** discrimination, as could not offering the same work-related benefits.

A person does not need to be employed or have 2 years qualifying service to make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.

- Job applicants who believe they have not been appointed because of a 'protected characteristic' can make a claim.
- New or established employees who are dismissed or treated unreasonably because of a health condition can make a discrimination claim.
- An employee subjected to harassment can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal.
- An employee asked to retire can make a discrimination claim at a tribunal

Legal risks

Successful unfair dismissal claims are limited to a compensation cap, whereas those for unlawful discrimination have no cap.

A positive employment culture, and swift action if conduct falls beneath acceptable standards will help mitigate the risks. An unhealthy culture will make it difficult to defend claims.

The time to defend and the cost of defending tribunal claims can be significant, irrespective of the outcome.

Culture and behaviour

We work in eclectic communities and working environments, and a positive culture within the council enables employees with different backgrounds and beliefs to share ideas and shape how the council achieves its objectives for their community.

It is important to recognise that different individuals may find different behaviours bullying or harassing so while there is not always intent to offend or cause harm, that does not mean that the effect of the behaviour has not caused harm or offence.

It can take people a period of time to decide to raise their concerns, as they worry about consequences (perhaps from peers by complaining about a colleague who is popular, or they fear victimisation from the perpetrator or others). The council should

consider whether there are opportunities (such as 121s to offer opportunity to reflect on relationships/morale) to identify issues earlier and address negative behaviours. Individuals can often mention concerns they are experiencing but not want to take it further. The council will reassure the complainant that it has a zero tolerance to bullying and harassment and remind them of the policy in place to address concerns. If the allegations mentioned are significant, the council may want to suggest that it will need to investigate further, even if a 'grievance' is not raised, so as to ensure that any concerns and risks are managed, and the council is meeting its responsibilities and duty of care as an employer.

Whilst both staff and councillors jointly determine the working culture, councillors are key in demonstrating what is and isn't acceptable behaviour. This is apparent from how councillors behave with each other in council meetings and also in how standards of behaviour are applied through the use of informal discussion and formal policies.

Scope

All council representatives are expected to uphold the values of the Dignity at Work Policy; however, this policy sets out how allegations from employees will be managed. As indicated in the policy, concerns from a contractor, agency worker etc. should be raised to the identified person, and an appropriate approach will be considered based on the situation and relationship of the complainant with the council.

Likewise, concerns raised about the behaviour of a contractor or agency worker would not generally be managed via the full process (such as the disciplinary process) but appropriate action would be considered based on the situation. To treat people (such as contractors, or a casual worker) engaged by the council the same as an employee could blur the status of the employment relationship, so consider seeking professional advice if needed.

Managers

Recognising that councils are of varying sizes, where the term manager/nominated manager is used it is recognised this could be the clerk, another employee of the council, or a councillor depending on the situation. In accordance with good practice, Ledbury Town Council have a defined management structure, a copy of which is attached to this policy.

Bullying and harassment & performance management

The policy sets out that bullying and harassment does not include appropriate criticism of an employee's behaviour or effective, robust performance management. It is not uncommon for an employee, when receiving critical feedback, to claim that this is bullying and/or harassing. It is the role of the nominated manager to provide effective and constructive feedback to encourage performance at the required standard.

Even when the feedback is not positive it should be fair, communicated in a professional and reasonable manner and shared with the objective of aiding understanding and achieving an improvement to overcome the shortfalls. There is no absolute definition of when the feedback may not be appropriate. Often it will be for the person/panel hearing the dignity at work complaint/grievance to determine whether the

performance management has upheld the standards expected in terms of respect and civility and any feedback has been shared in a fair and professional way.

Responsibilities

All staff and representatives of the council are responsible for their own behaviour in the workplace and for taking steps to revise unacceptable behaviour and appropriately challenge that of others.

Leaders – councillors, clerks, chief officers, managers - are responsible for ensuring that these standards of treating people with civility, respect and courtesy are upheld, both through their own example, and by communicating and promoting these expectations to all employees. They are also responsible for ensuring that concerns raised are treated seriously and addressed in line with this policy in a timely manner.

During the investigation

Employers have a duty of care to provide a safe place of work. If a complaint is made, discuss how to manage working relationships whilst the allegation is being investigated and until the outcome is disclosed. This is as much for the protection of the alleged perpetrator as for the aggrieved.

Consider whether a neutral person should be offered as a 'listening ear' for both parties in the investigation. This could be a councillor or nominated manager who is not involved in the investigation or allegations and can be a point of check in as raising, or being subject to allegations can be stressful.

Offer other support that may be appropriate to the situation such as signposting to support groups, time off for counselling etc. If you have suspended a staff member, your duty of care continues, and it is important to consider their wellbeing and mental health.

Ensure that you communicate regularly with both parties.

The investigation and any subsequent hearing should be completed in accordance with the grievance policy which sets out a process for dealing with concerns. You should ensure that the grievance policy adopted adheres to any local policies and procedures, with consideration of any timescales and escalation routes in your locally adopted policy.

Confidentiality

It may be possible for concerns to be raised with the perpetrator without disclosing the name of the complainant however in a small council it is likely that it will be clear that the accused will know where the accusation has come from. The council representative (clerk/councillor) speaking to the alleged perpetrator must be clear that the discussion is confidential, and the individual would be at risk of formal disciplinary action if there is any sort of victimisation or retaliation for the individual raising their concern.

During any formal investigation it may be necessary to disclose the nature of the allegations and where they came from to ensure a fair and balanced investigation and process. This should be discussed with the person raising the concerns to understand any issues and how they may be mitigated. In some situations, it may be appropriate to provide anonymised witness statements however this would be a last resort, and could compromise the fairness of the process. Where there is a genuine fear of consequences and this may need to be considered, it is recommended that professional advice is sought. For the same reason it can be difficult for a council to consider an anonymous complaint, however if the concerns are significant and compromise the council in their duty of care to employees, then consideration of how to deal with the matter may be required.

Victimisation

All employees have the right to raise genuine concerns without the fear of reprisals. If the aggrieved (or a witness) is treated differently / less favourably because they have raised a complaint, then this is victimisation. This would include isolating someone because they have made a complaint, cancelling a planned training event, or giving them a heavier or more difficult workload. Victimisation can lead to a claim to an employment tribunal.

False allegations

If an employee makes an allegation that they know to be untrue, or gives evidence that they know to be untrue, the council should consider the matter under the disciplinary procedure. Such an allegation would potentially be gross misconduct.

Complaints against Councillors

Following the Ledbury case, the law is clear that any formal complaint about a councillor regarding a breach of the code of conduct must be referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation (either by the complainant, or the Council with agreement of the complainant). During the investigation, it is critical to ensure that where an employee of the council has made the complaint, that the council agrees reasonable measures with the employee to protect their health and safety. Such measures may include a temporary change in duties, change of work location, not attending meetings with the person about whom the complaint has been made etc.

Careful consideration is required where a grievance is raised against the council as a whole due to lack of support related to councillor behaviours. The specific allegations will need to be considered to determine whether the allegations can be addressed by the council or require exploration of the councillors behaviour in order to respond, in which case the Monitoring Officer may be required to investigate the alleged behaviours of a/any councillors where this may relate to the code of conduct. It is a matter of fact whether the complaint is against the council and can therefore be dealt with by the council's grievance procedure or against a councillor and can only be dealt with by the Monitoring Officer.

FULL COUNCIL	15 OCTOBER 2026	AGENDA ITEM: 14iii
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Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

COUNCILLOR AND STAFF PROTOCOL REVIEW

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with a revised Councillor and Staff Protocol and explain the principal amendments.

Detailed Information

The following report was provided to a meeting of the Resources Committee held on 24 September 2026.

The protocol governs the working relationship between Councillors and employees and supports lawful, respectful and effective Council business. The review updates provisions that are outdated, unclear or no longer consistent with the Council's current governance and employment arrangements.

Principal amendments

Governance and decision making: Clarifies the Chair's role, the Town Clerk's responsibilities as Proper Officer, the preparation and issue of agendas and minutes, and the principle that individual Councillors cannot make decisions or give instructions on behalf of the Council without lawful delegated authority.

Standards and professional relationships: Updates the reference to the Seven Principles of Public Life and strengthens expectations concerning mutual respect, impartiality, professional boundaries and the declaration of relationships that may create an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Councillor contact with employees: Replaces the absolute restriction on direct contact with more practical arrangements using the Town Clerk, relevant managers and shared Council contact details, while retaining clear line-management controls and protecting employees' personal contact information.

Employment matters and complaints: Confirms that Councillors must not manage employees or criticise their conduct or capability publicly. Concerns must be raised through the appropriate employment process, with an alternative route where a concern relates to the Town Clerk.

Concerns about Councillor conduct: Clarifies the distinction between the Council's responsibilities as an employer and the Monitoring Officer's role in considering possible breaches of the Councillor Code of Conduct.

Information and confidentiality: Clarifies how requests made on behalf of third parties should be handled and replaces obsolete references to the Standards Board for England with current Code of Conduct, regulatory and data-protection arrangements.

Communications and media: Updates references to the Council's Press and Media Policy, removes the obsolete reference to Mendip District Council, identifies Herefordshire Council as the relevant principal authority and adds provisions covering social media and the distinction between personal and official communications.

Drafting and consistency: Corrects duplicated numbering, outdated terminology and references to Chair, Mayor, employees and relevant Council policies.

Implications

The amendments are intended to improve governance, employment practice and clarity of responsibility. No direct financial implications arise from adopting the revised protocol, although Councillors and employees should be made aware of the updated requirements and the protocol should be included in induction arrangements.

Recommendation

That Members approve the revised Councillor and Staff Protocol as per the recommendation from the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 24 September 2026.



LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Councillor & Staff Protocol & Principles of Good Practice

Date Adopted: 6 February 2020

Review Date: [insert date of review]

This Protocol sets out the standards of conduct and working arrangements expected in relationships between Councillors and employees. It should be read alongside the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, Dignity at Work Policy, Staff Handbook, Press and Media Policy and other relevant policies, together with current sector guidance.

Copies of this Protocol will be issued to all Councillors following election or co-option and to all staff on appointment. It will complement any statutory procedures or legislation enacted from time to time.

1. Section 1: Chairing the Council (role of the Mayor)

1.1 The Chair of the Council, who may also be known as the Mayor, is elected annually by the Council and will receive appropriate briefings from the Town Clerk. The civic title of Mayor confers no additional decision-making powers. When chairing a meeting, the Chair has the following responsibilities:

- To uphold and promote the purposes of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, and to interpret the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations when necessary;
- To preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the community;
- To ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which Councillors who do not hold committee chairs are able to hold the Mayor and committee chairs to account;
- To promote public involvement in the Council's activities;
- To promote respectful, lawful and effective decision-making; and
- To attend civic and ceremonial functions as determined by the Council or appropriate to the office of Mayor.

2. Section 2: Council Decision Making

2.1 Council meetings will follow the Council's procedural rules set out in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations when considering any matter.

2.2 All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:

- Proportionality i.e. the action should be proportionate to the desired outcome;
- Due consultation and the taking of advice from Officers;
- Respect for human rights;
- Presumption in favour of openness;
- Clarity of aims and desired outcomes;
- Reflecting the balance of evidence, or legal or financial advice.

2.3 Preparation of Council agendas, minutes and reports and conduct of meetings.

2.3.1 Agendas: As Proper Officer, the Town Clerk is responsible for preparing, signing and issuing meeting summonses and agendas in accordance with legislation and the Council's Standing Orders. This includes an extraordinary meeting properly called by the

Chair or by Councillors. The Town Clerk will normally consult the appropriate Chair when preparing an agenda but must ensure that the agenda is lawful and that the Council's procedural requirements are met.

The Chair works in partnership with the Town Clerk to make sure that the Council is properly informed for making lawful decisions during meetings.

Requests for items to be placed on an agenda will be considered by the Town Clerk in consultation with the appropriate Chair and in accordance with Standing Orders. Councillors may also submit motions in accordance with Standing Orders. No person may require an unlawful or procedurally improper item to be included.

2.3.2 Officers at meetings: The Town Clerk, or an officer authorised by the Town Clerk, will normally attend formal meetings of the Council, committees and sub-committees to provide procedural and professional advice and to arrange for the preparation of the minutes.

2.3.3 Minutes: The Town Clerk, or an authorised officer, is responsible for preparing and issuing draft minutes. The minutes remain draft until approved by the relevant meeting and signed by the person presiding.

2.3.4 Authority to act: No individual Councillor, including the Chair of the Council, the Mayor or a committee Chair, and no informal group of Councillors may make a decision or give an instruction on behalf of the Council unless specific lawful authority has been delegated. There is no general power of "Chair's action".

3. Section 3 - Protocol for Councillor/Staff relations Contents

3.1 Introduction and Principles

3.1.1 The purpose of this Protocol is to guide Councillors and staff of Ledbury Town Council in their relations with one another and their dealings with other Councillors and staff from any tier of Government in such a way as to ensure the smooth running of the Council.

3.1.2 Given the variety and complexity of such relations, this Protocol does not seek to be either prescriptive or comprehensive. It simply offers guidance on some of the issues which most commonly arise. It is hoped, however, that the approach which it adopts to these issues will serve as a guide to dealing with other circumstances.

- 3.1.3 This Protocol is to a large extent a written statement of current practice and convention. It seeks to promote greater clarity and certainty. If the Protocol is followed it should ensure that Councillors receive objective and impartial advice and that staff are protected from accusations of bias and any undue influence from Councillors.
- 3.1.4 The Protocol reflects the principles underlying the Councillor Code of Conduct. The Code is intended to maintain public confidence in local government and requires high standards of personal conduct.
- 3.1.5 The Council has adopted a Code of Conduct for Councillors. This Protocol should be read alongside that Code and the Council's other relevant policies and procedures.
- 3.1.6 The Seven Principles of Public Life are selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. These principles underpin the conduct expected of Councillors. Councillors must respect the political impartiality and professional integrity of the Council's statutory officers and other employees. Employees are likewise expected to act professionally, impartially and with respect in their dealings with Councillors.

3.2 General Points

- 3.2.1 Both Councillors and staff are servants of the public and they are indispensable to one another. But their responsibilities are distinct.
- 3.2.2 **Roles of Councillors:** Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Councillors are democratically elected and are accountable to the electorate for their actions. An important feature of each Councillor's role is to represent the interests of their constituents, irrespective of how they may have voted in an election. The expectation is that Councillors will be more aware of the views of their constituents on major policy developments before decisions are taken collectively at Council meetings.

3.2.2.1

- Councillors should normally direct enquiries to the Town Clerk, the relevant manager or a designated shared Council email address, in accordance with the Council's agreed communication arrangements.
- Where the appropriate officer is unavailable, the Councillor should leave sufficient details for the enquiry to be allocated and answered.

- The Town Clerk or relevant manager may authorise direct contact with another employee where this will assist the efficient conduct of Council business.
- Councillors should use the Council's published contact details and should not use an employee's personal telephone number unless the employee has expressly authorised this for a specific operational purpose.
- Emails should be directed to the Town Clerk, relevant manager or designated shared mailbox, having regard to the subject matter and the Council's agreed communication arrangements.
- Reasonable exceptions may be agreed by the Town Clerk for operational efficiency, emergencies or established project and committee working arrangements.
- Council email accounts must be used for Council business. Email must not be used to conduct collective debate or reach decisions outside a properly convened meeting. Councillors and employees should avoid unnecessary reply-all messages and must comply with the Council's data protection, information security and acceptable-use requirements.

3.2.3 Role of employees: The Town Clerk is the Council's Proper Officer and Head of Paid Service and is responsible for day-to-day management and operational decisions, subject to Council policy and lawful delegations. Employees support the Council as a corporate body and must act professionally and impartially. Councillors must respect the management structure and must not direct or manage individual employees.

3.2.4 The Town Council has a duty to implement decisions of the Council which are lawful, and which have been properly approved in accordance with the requirements of the law recorded in the Minutes of the Council.

3.2.5 **Employer/Staff issues:** At the heart of this Protocol, is the importance of mutual respect. Councillor/staff relationships should be conducted in a positive and constructive way. Therefore, it is important that any dealings between Councillors and staff should observe reasonable standards of courtesy and that neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position or seek to exert undue influence on the other party.

3.2.6 Councillors should recognise in their dealings with staff that inappropriate conduct or behaviour on their part could lead to a case being brought to an employment tribunal by an aggrieved staff member. It is proper for a Councillor to make written or oral representations about a matter affecting a constituent who also happens to be a staff member but they should avoid taking a proactive part or represent or act as an advocate on behalf of the

staff in any disciplinary or grievance procedures brought against the Council by the staff member.

- 3.2.7 Councillors should not place inappropriate pressure on staff and must ensure that all communication between them (including written communication) does not bring the Council into disrepute, cause any embarrassment to them, or lead to a breakdown of mutual trust respect and courtesy in Councillor/ staff relations.
- 3.2.8 Councillors and staff should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully or otherwise against any person. They should treat people with respect, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.
- 3.2.9 A Councillor must not criticise or question an employee's conduct, capability or performance in public or seek to deal with an employment matter personally. Any concern about an employee should be raised privately with the Town Clerk and managed under the appropriate employment procedure. A concern about the Town Clerk should be raised with the Chair of the Council or the Chair of the committee responsible for staffing, in accordance with the Council's adopted procedures.
- 3.2.10 Any action taken against a staff member in respect of a complaint will be in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Disciplinary Rules and Procedures contained within the Staff Handbook.
- 3.2.11 A staff member should not raise with a Councillor matters relating to the conduct or capability of another staff member or to the internal management of a Section/Division/Department at or in a manner that is incompatible with the overall objectives of this Protocol. This does not, however, prevent a staff member raising a concern with a Councillor under the Council's whistleblowing procedure.
- 3.2.12 Where an employee considers that a Councillor has failed to treat them with dignity, respect or courtesy, the matter should be raised with the Town Clerk or through the Council's Dignity at Work or grievance arrangements. A matter concerning the Town Clerk should be raised through the alternative route specified in the relevant policy. Where the alleged conduct may breach the Councillor Code of Conduct, a complaint may be made to the Monitoring Officer. The Council may also take proportionate steps as an employer to protect employees and manage working arrangements.

- 3.2.13 Councillors and employees must declare any close personal, family or financial relationship that could create an actual or perceived conflict of interest and must comply with the Code of Conduct and relevant employment policies. Informal contact outside formal meetings must not compromise professional boundaries, impartiality or confidentiality.
- 3.2.14 Effective working relationships between Councillors, committee Chairs and employees are important. Those relationships must remain professional and must not give rise to actual or perceived favouritism, improper influence or loss of impartiality.

3.3 The Relationship: Staff Support to Councillors: General Points

- 3.3.1 The Town Clerk is responsible for day-to-day managerial and operational decisions within the authority and for the provision of support to all Councillors.
- 3.3.2 Certain statutory staff members - the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer have specific roles. These are addressed in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Their roles need to be understood and respected by all Councillors.
- 3.3.3 **Independence of the Town Clerk:** The Town Clerk is not answerable to any individual Councillor, not even to the Chair (Mayor). The Town Clerk is an independent and objective servant of the Council as a single corporate body, recognising that the Council is responsible for all decisions and taking instructions from the Council in its capacity as a single corporate body.
- 3.3.4 The Town Clerk has a right and a duty to report to the Council, or any committee or sub-committee on any issue which they deem appropriate. They have a right and obligation to obtain sound advice as they deem appropriate in order to assist in their role in reporting to the Council.
- 3.3.5 As an independent and objective professional, the Town Clerk (or such delegated staff member) advises the Council on whether decisions are lawful and ways in which decisions can be implemented.
- 3.3.6 The Town Clerk, or another staff member or adviser as they determine, shall research topics of concern to the Council and provide unbiased information to enable the Council to make an informed decision.

3.3.7 The following key principles reflect the way in which the staff generally relate to Councillors:

- All staff are recruited by and accountable to the Town Clerk, where relevant through appointed Line Managers;
- support from staff is needed for all the authority's functions including Council, Committees and individual Councillors representing their communities etc.;
- day-to-day managerial and operational decisions remain the responsibility of the Town Clerk.

3.3.8 On occasion, a decision may be reached which authorises the Town Clerk to take action between meetings following consultation with a specific Councillor. It should be recognised that it is the Town Clerk, rather than the Councillor or Councillors, who takes the action and it is the Town Clerk who is legally accountable for it.

3.3.9 Councillors must not issue orders, instructions or directions to staff. Authorisation to carry out work on behalf of the Council can only be issued by the Town Clerk. The office of Mayor or as a Committee Chair does not confer this status.

3.3.10 Staff within a department are accountable to their Line Manager and whilst staff should always seek to assist a Councillor, they must not, in so doing, go beyond the bounds of whatever authority they have been given by their Line Manager.

3.3.11 Staff will do their best to give timely responses to Councillors' enquiries. However, staff should not have unreasonable requests placed on them. Their work priorities are set and managed by their Line Managers. Councillors should avoid disrupting staff members work by imposing their own priorities.

3.3.12 Much of the work of the Council is time sensitive and staff are usually working to tight deadlines. In order to help minimise disruption and to enable staff, particularly Managers to plan and prioritise their work programme, Councillors should always seek to make an appointment to see a staff member and give an outline of what issues are to be discussed. This will help staff to provide the most relevant advice as preparation and research where necessary can be carried out before the meeting.

3.3.13 Councillors should respond to officer enquiries within the timeframe stated, particularly where the Council must meet a statutory or externally imposed deadline. If a Councillor cannot respond in time, they should notify the officer promptly. Officers

should allow a reasonable response period having regard to urgency and Councillors' availability.

3.3.14 Staff should not discuss with a councillor personal matters concerning themselves or another individual staff member. This does not prevent an officer raising on a personal basis, and in their own time, a matter with their ward Councillor.

3.3.15 Councillors and staff should respect each other's free time. Council business should only be discussed when both Councillor and staff member are acting in their official capacity.

3.4 Staff member Advice to Party Groups and Individual Councillors

3.4.1 It must be recognised by all staff and Councillors that in discharging their duties and responsibilities, staff serve the Council as a whole and not any political group, combination of groups or any individual Councillor of the Council.

3.4.2 In the law relating to town or parish councils, there is no provision dealing with party political groups.

3.4.3 Staff must at all times maintain political neutrality. They are not servants of any particular party, group, or individual although where a party or group has a majority of seats on the Council, staff can take appropriate recognition of that fact in the day to day working of the Council as long as no decision or regulation of the Council is not complied with or breached. All staff must, in their dealings with political groups and individual Councillors, treat them in a fair and even-handed manner.

3.4.4 Certain points must, therefore, be clearly understood by all those representing party groups. In particular:

- Staff assistance must not extend beyond providing information and advice in relation to matters of Council business. Staff must not be involved in advising on matters of party business.
- Where staff provide information and advice to a party group in relation to a matter of Council business, this cannot act as a substitute for providing all necessary information and advice to the relevant Council decision making body when the matter in question is considered.

3.4.5 Whilst support for Councillors' Ward work is legitimate, care should be taken if staff are asked to accompany Councillors to ward surgeries. In such circumstances:

- The surgeries must be open to the general public, and
- staff should not be requested to accompany Councillors to surgeries held in the offices or premises of political parties.

3.4.6 Staff must never be asked to attend ward or constituency political party meetings.

3.4.7 It is acknowledged that some Council staff may receive and handle messages for Councillors on topics unrelated to the Council. Whilst these will often concern diary management, care should be taken to avoid Council resources being used for private or party political purposes.

3.4.8 In seeking to deal with constituents' queries or concerns, Councillors should respect the Council's procedures. Staff have many pressures on their time. They may not be able to carry out the work required by Councillors in the requested timescale and may need to seek instructions from their Line Managers.

3.5 Use of Council Resources

3.5.1 A Councillor must, when using or authorising the use of the resources of the Council, act in accordance with the authority's requirements and ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes and that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the authority or of the office to which the Councillor has been elected or appointed.

3.5.2 The Council provides support services such as stationery, typing, printing, photocopying to Councillors to assist them in discharging their role as Councillors of the Council. Such support services must therefore only be used on Council business and should never be used in connection with party political or campaigning activity or for private purposes.

3.6 Councillors' Access to Information and to Council Documents

3.6.1 There is a general presumption of open government within the Council. Councillors are free to approach any Council department to obtain such information, explanation and advice (about that department's functions) as they may reasonably need in order to assist them in discharging their role as Councillors of the Council. This can range from a request for general information about some aspect of a department's activities to a request for specific information on behalf of a constituent. Such approaches should normally be directed to the appropriate Line Manager concerned.

3.6.2 A request made by a Councillor on behalf of a constituent or other third party will be handled according to its nature. It may be dealt

with as ordinary Council business or, where applicable, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 or data protection legislation. The Council's normal procedures will apply.

- 3.6.3 As regards the legal rights of Councillors to inspect Council documents, these are covered partly by statute and partly by the common law.
- 3.6.4 Councillors have a statutory right to inspect any Council document which contains material relating to any business which is to be transacted by the Council. This right applies irrespective of whether the Councillor is a Councillor of the Committee or Sub Committee concerned and extends not only to reports which are to be submitted to the meeting, but also to any relevant background papers. This right does not, however, apply to documents relating to certain items which may appear as a confidential item on the agenda for a meeting. The items in question are those which contain exempt information relating to staff, occupiers of Council property, applicants for grants and other services, the care of children, contract and industrial relations negotiations, advice from Counsel and criminal investigations.
- 3.6.5 A Councillor has a prima facie right to inspect Council documents so far as their access to the document is reasonably necessary to enable the Councillor properly to perform their duties as a Councillor of the Council. This principle is commonly referred to as the 'need to know' principle.
- 3.6.6 The exercise of this common law right depends therefore, upon an individual Councillor being able to demonstrate that they have the necessary 'need to know'. In this respect, a Councillor has no right to 'a roving commission' to go and examine documents of the Council. Mere curiosity is not sufficient. The crucial question is the determination of the 'need to know'. This question must initially be determined by the particular Line Manager whose department holds the document in question, in consultation with the Town Clerk.
- 3.6.7 In some circumstances (e.g. a Committee Councillor wishing to inspect documents relating to the business of that Committee) a Councillor's 'need to know' will normally be presumed. In other circumstances (e.g. a Councillor wishing to inspect documents which contain personal information about third parties) the Councillor will normally be expected to justify the request in specific terms. In some circumstances duties of confidentiality to external bodies, or imposed by statute may override the common law right.

3.6.8 Any Council information provided to a Councillor must only be used by the Councillor for the purpose for which it was provided, i.e. in connection with the proper performance of the Councillor's duties as a Councillor of the Council. Therefore, for example, early drafts of Committee reports/briefing papers are not suitable for public disclosure and should not be used other than for the purpose for which they were supplied.

3.6.9 A Councillor must not:

- Disclose information given to them in confidence by anyone or information acquired which they believe is of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it, or unless he is required by law to do so; and
- Prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law'

3.6.10 A suspected breach of confidentiality may be addressed under the Councillor Code of Conduct and referred to the Monitoring Officer where appropriate. It may also have legal, regulatory or data protection consequences for the Councillor and/or the Council.

3.6.11 All requests from a Councillor to a staff member for sight of information, should, if it is appropriate to do so, be provided within an agreed timescale.

3.7 Correspondence (including email)

3.7.1 Correspondence between an individual Councillor and a staff member should not normally be copied (by the staff member) to any other Councillor. Where it is necessary to copy the correspondence to another Councillor, this should be made clear to the original Councillor. In other words, a system of 'silent copies' should not be employed.

3.7.2 Letters and emails must be sent on Ledbury Town Council headed paper or from a Council account. It will, however, be appropriate in certain circumstances (e.g. representations to a Government Minister) for a letter or email to appear in the name of the Mayor as Chair of the Council. Letters and emails which, for example, create legal obligations or give instructions on behalf of the Council should never be sent out in the name of a Councillor.

3.8 Publicity and Press Releases

3.8.1 Local authorities are accountable to their electorate. Accountability requires local understanding. This will be promoted by the authority, explaining its objectives and policies to the

electors and Council tax-payers. Increasingly, local authorities see this task as an essential part of providing services. Good, effective publicity aimed to improve public awareness of a Council's activities is, in the words of the Government, "to be welcomed".

- 3.8.2 Publicity is, however, a sensitive matter in any political environment because of the impact it can have. Expenditure on publicity can be significant. It is essential, therefore, to ensure that local authority decisions on publicity are properly made in accordance with clear principles of good practice.
- 3.8.3 The Government has issued a Code of [Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity](#). The purpose of the Code is to set out principles that should apply to all publicity at public expense and which traditionally have applied in both central and local government and concerns the content, style, distribution and such other matters as appropriate.
- 3.8.4 Staff and Councillors of the Council will, therefore, in making decisions on publicity, take account of the provisions of this Code. If in doubt, staff and/or Councillors should initially seek advice from the Town Clerk. Particular care should be paid to any publicity used by the Council around the time of an election.
- 3.8.5 Press releases and other public communications, including website and social media content, will be issued in accordance with the Council's current Press and Media Policy.
- 3.8.6 Official relations with the media are managed by the Town Clerk in consultation, where appropriate, with the Mayor, Chair of the Council or relevant committee Chair. The Town Clerk may authorise another employee to provide factual information or manage day-to-day communications in accordance with the adopted policy.
- 3.8.7 Councillors may comment on approved Council policies but may not comment on behalf of the Council on any non-policy matter. If any Councillor wishes to make comments to the press, it must be made clear that the comment is that of the individual Councillor and not necessarily the corporate view of the Town Council.
- 3.8.8 As outlined in the protocol there are two types of press release:
- Official Council Releases - An Official Council release is made on behalf of the Council as a whole; it will be written by an officer and issued by the Town Clerk. It is non-party political and will normally include a quote from the relevant Councillor(s). This is usually the Chair of the Council or Committee Chair.

- Councillor statements - Personal statements or releases are written and issued by the individual Councillor. They must make clear that they do not represent the corporate view of the Council, must not use the Council logo or an employee's name or contact details without authority, and must comply with the Code of Conduct and confidentiality obligations. Councillors may seek factual or procedural advice from the Town Clerk and Code of Conduct advice from the Monitoring Officer at Herefordshire Council.

3.8.9 The Town Clerk will assist Councillors in their relations with the media. Any staff member assisting a Councillor with media relations must act at all times in the interests of the whole Council and in a politically impartial manner.

3.8.10 Other than factual statements, Councillors should not seek assistance from a staff member with the preparation or issue of any media statement that will adversely affect the reputation of the Council.

3.8.11 Social media: Councillors and employees must distinguish clearly between personal and official communications. They must not disclose confidential information, present a personal view as the Council's corporate position, use Council resources for party-political purposes or publish material that breaches the Code of Conduct, employment obligations or the Council's policies.

3.9 Involvement of Local Councillors

3.9.1 Whenever a public meeting is organised by the Council to consider a local issue, the Councillors representing the Electoral Division or Divisions (Wards) affected should as a matter of course, be invited to attend the meeting.

3.9.2 Similarly, whenever the Council undertakes any form of consultative exercise on a local issue, the Ward Councillors should be notified at the outset of the exercise.

3.9.3 More generally, staff should consider whether other policy or briefing papers, or other topics being discussed with Committee, should be discussed with relevant Ward Councillors.

3.10 Conclusion

3.10.1 Mutual understanding, openness on these sorts of sensitive issues and basic respect are the greatest safeguard of the integrity of the Council, its Councillors and staff.

3.11 Arbitration

3.11.1 Where necessary, the Town Clerk will arbitrate on the interpretation of this protocol.

FULL COUNCIL	15 OCTOBER 2026	AGENDA ITEM: 16
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Report prepared by Sophie Rudd – Administrative Assistant to the Clerk

PLANNING CONSULTATIONS

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with a list of Planning Consultations received from Herefordshire Council.

Detailed Information

Below is a list of planning consultations received from Herefordshire Council for comment from Ledbury Town Council, as a Statutory Consultee.

		Deadline for comments/ determination	Application details
1.	<u>262349</u>	Deadline date for comments 12/10/2026 Target determination date 12/11/2026	Change of use from Factory (B2) to Warehouse & Distribution (B8) - H Westons & Sons Ltd (Applewood) Dymock Road Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 2HT
2.	<u>262547</u>	Deadline date for comments 15/10/2026 Target determination date 27/10/2026	Erection of a single dwelling (Use Class C3), repairs to boundary walls and associated soft and hard landscaping. - 17-19 The Homend Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1BN
3.	<u>262771</u>	Deadline date for comments 15/10/2026 Target determination date 16/11/2026	Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Change of use of first floor and part ground floor from retail (Use Class E) to 3 No. residential flats (Use Class C3). - 119-121 The Homend, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1BP
4.	<u>262797</u>	Deadline date for comments 13/10/2026 Target determination date 23/11/2026	Application for Permission in Principle for a four bedroom dwelling is to be made from 5x 40ftx8ft containers on the ground floor, with a timber frame above to create a dormer style bungalow. There will also be a detached garage within the

			site, that is to be made from 2x 30ftx8ft containers, with at least 5 parking spaces in front - Land at The Old Paddocks Bromyard Road Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1LG
5.	<u>262921</u>	Deadline date for comments 26/10/2026 Target determination date 13/11/2026	Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Lower Orchard South Parade Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 2HA

Recommendation

Members are requested to give consideration to the above planning consultations and provide relevant comments where applicable to be submitted to Herefordshire Council accordingly.

Planning Decisions Log

Planning App	Details	Case Officer	LTC's Recommendation	HFDS Decision
LTC MEETING 9 JANUARY 2025				
<u>242956</u>	Proposed damp proofing to be applied to masonry walls with internal finish being re-applied in a like for like manner – 82 The Homend, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1BX LISTED BUILDING CONSENT	AM	No objection	No decision
LTC MEETING 8 JANUARY 2026				
<u>253317</u>	Part change of use from a mixed residential and retail use, to residential use. - 123 The Homend Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1BP - LISTED BUILDING CONSENT	AM	No objection	No decision
<u>253316</u>	Part change of use from a mixed residential and retail use, to residential use. - 123 The Homend Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1BP	AM	No objection	No decision
23 APRIL 2026				
<u>250297</u>	Dayroom/laundry room for consented mobile homes site (part retrospective). - Little Bush Pitch Bush Pitch Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 2PX	AM	Agreed that no recommendation be made in respect of this PA until such time a response is received from PO's- response received 17.06.2026 - Thank you for your query. The site is no longer a single family site as we have permission for two additional mobile home	No decision

			pitches, previously permitted. Please could you look this up to confirm the year? I couldn't find the planning application online and I can't remember the year. The new proposed day room is to cater for these. The ground has been separated since the last application in 2023.	
4 JUNE 2026				
<u>261165</u>	Approval of reserved matters relating to layout, scale, external appearance and landscaping (pursuant to outline planning permission appeal ref. APP/W1850/W/20/3244410 and LPA ref. 171532) for 104 dwellings with associated parking, garages, highway and drainage infrastructure (Phase 2B). - Land North of Viaduct, Adjoining Orchard Business Park, Ledbury, Herefordshire,	OJ	That this planning application be referred to a meeting of the Major Planning Application Working Party. – No objection.	No decision
<u>261238</u>	Application for variation/ removal of conditions following grant of planning permission 233023. To remove condition 27 and to vary the wording of conditions 1, 8, 9, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26. To remove the Biddulph Way Cycle Link and for compliance with the already discharged information. Land South of Leadon Way, Ledbury, Herefordshire,	OJ	That this planning application be referred to a meeting of the Major Planning Application Working Party. – No objection.	No decision
25 JUNE 2026				

<u>250297</u>	Dayroom/laundry room for consented mobile homes site (part retrospective) – Little Bush Pitch, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2PX	AM	That it be noted that Councillor Peberdy has requested redirection of this planning application	No Decision
<u>261508</u>	Change of use of an existing shop (Use Class E) to a Hot Food takeaway (sui generis) – 23 High Street, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1DS	AM	No Objection	No Decision
<u>261536</u>	Regularisation of unconsented work: Suspended ground floor replacement. Exposed timber frame and brick infill within the shop. Blockwork infilled doorway. Front casement windows and internal secondary glazing. Rear bedroom and kitchen windows. Kitchen extractor flue. - Wing On 26 New Street Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 2DX – LISTED BUILDING CONSENT	AM	No Objection	No Decision
16 JULY 2026				
<u>261165</u>	Approval of reserved matters relating to layout, scale, external appearance and landscaping (pursuant to outline planning permission appeal ref. APP/W1850/W/20/3244410 and LPA ref. 171532) for 104 dwellings with associated parking, garages, highway and drainage infrastructure (Phase 2B). - Land North of Viaduct, Adjoining Orchard Business Park, Ledbury, Herefordshire,	OJ	No Objection	No Decision
<u>261238</u>	Application for variation/ removal of conditions following grant of planning permission 233023. To remove condition 27 and to vary the wording of conditions 1, 8, 9, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26. To remove the Biddulph Way Cycle Link and for compliance with the already discharged information. Land South of Leadon Way, Ledbury, Herefordshire	OJ	No Objection	No Decision
6 AUGUST 2026				
<u>261536</u>	Regularisation of unconsented work: Suspended ground floor replacement. Exposed timber frame and brick infill within the shop. Blockwork infilled doorway. Front casement windows and internal secondary glazing. Rear bedroom and kitchen windows. Kitchen	AM	No Objection	No Decision

	extractor flue. - Wing On, 26 New Street, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2DX – Reconsultation			
<u>262052</u>	Construction of pump track and associated landscaping – Land at Martins Way Park, Ledbury, Herefordshire	RJ	Objection submitted by email on 02/10/2026.	No Decision
3 SEPTEMBER 2026				
<u>261558</u>	Garaging with storage above and external staircases as revised design to previously approved carport building to Plots D and E. - Site at Upper Mitchell Farm Bradlow and Westhill Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1JF	AM	No objection	No Decision
<u>262125</u>	Modernisation and improvement of existing off-road driving track and obstacles, with associated landscape, drainage and biodiversity enhancement works. - Land at Land Rover Experience, Sheep Field Eastnor Ledbury Herefordshire	CAH	No objection	No Decision
24 SEPTEMBER 2026				
<u>262054</u>	Replacement of rear concrete balcony - St Katherines Hospital High Street Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1DZ	KR	No objection	No Decision
<u>262055</u>	Replacement of rear concrete balcony - St Katherines Hospital High Street Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1DZ- Listed Building Consent	KR	No objection	No Decision
<u>262507</u>	Change of use of therapy centre (Use Class E(e)) to dwellinghouse (UseClass C3) - reversion to residential use whose change of use was permitted in 2014. - Lodge Cottage The Homend Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1AR	KR	No objection	No Decision
<u>262547</u>	Erection of a single dwelling (Use Class C3), repairs to boundary walls and associated soft and hard landscaping. - 17-19 The Homend Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 1BN	AM	This item was deferred to a future meeting of Council subject to additional information being available.	No Decision

Ms Angela Price
Town Council Office
1-3 Church Street
Ledbury
Herefordshire
HR8 1DH
clerk@ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk; adminclerk@ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk>

Dear Ms Price

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
APPEAL UNDER SECTION S78(1) RELATING TO WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS (PART 1)
PROCEDURE**

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: DESCRIPTION:	262049 - Land north east of Underwood Barn, Staplow, Ledbury, HR8 1NP Application for Permission in Principle for a residential development, of 1 or 2 dwellinghouses (Use Class C3), and associated works
APPELLANT: APPEAL REFERENCE: APPEAL START DATE: WEBSITE LINK:	Mr M Withington 6016473 25 September 2026 https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk

I am writing to let you know that an appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against Herefordshire Council for the following reason: **Refusal of Permission in Principle**. The appeal will be determined on the basis of **written representations**. The procedure to be followed is set out in Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Appeals) (Written Representations Procedure) (England) Regulations 2009.

As this appeal is proceeding under the **Part 1 process**, there is no opportunity for you to submit comments. However, we have forwarded all the representations made to us on the application to the Planning Inspectorate and the appellant. These will be considered by the Inspector when determining the appeal.

If you wish to withdraw any representations you made on the application, you must make this request to the Planning Inspectorate by **23 October 2026**. You can do this by either contacting their customer service team on 0303 444 5000 or by completing their [online customer contact form](#)

All documents will be published to the Council's website. Appeal documentation can be viewed on the Council's website by using the following link <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk>. If you do not have access to the Internet, access is available at Herefordshire Council Customer Service Centres - to check opening times please ring 01432 260000.

When the appeal has been determined the decision will be published on the Council's website and online at <https://appeal-planning-decision.service.gov.uk/comment-planning-appeal>

All personal data held is processed in accordance with data protection law. For further information please see our website https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/62/apply_for_planning_permission/3

Yours sincerely

Mrs Linda White
TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFFICER

FULL COUNCIL	15 OCTOBER 2026	AGENDA ITEM: 20
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Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

BANK CRESCENT: REQUEST FOR TRAFFIC MEASURES

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to ask Members to give consideration to a resident's request for the Town Council to support measures to address vehicles driving on the pavement on Bank Crescent.

Detailed Information

A resident has contacted the Town Council regarding the lower section of Bank Crescent, opposite numbers 5–9. The resident advises that vehicles travelling uphill routinely drive onto the pavement. They attribute this to vehicles parked along the outside of the bend, which restrict visibility for drivers travelling in opposite directions.

The resident has expressed particular concern for pedestrian safety, noting that the nearby households include young children. A petition has been raised concerning this section of the road.

The resident advises that Herefordshire Council's road safety team is investigating the matter and has asked that the request for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) also be raised through the Town Council.

Considerations

Herefordshire Council is responsible for assessing and making TROs. Its published process requires requests from residents to be brought through the relevant town or parish council and local Ward Councillor. A request for a TRO does not establish what restriction, if any, will ultimately be appropriate; this will depend on Herefordshire Council's investigation and consultation.

Given the reported practice of vehicles driving on the pavement, it may be appropriate to ask the road safety team to consider whether any measures are needed while its investigation and any TRO process take place.

Financial implications

There are no identified financial implications for the Town Council at this stage. If Herefordshire Council seeks a financial contribution towards any proposed measures, this would need to be reported to Members for consideration.

Equality considerations

In considering this request, Members should have due regard to the public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Vehicles driving onto the pavement may present particular difficulties for children and for disabled pedestrians, including people who use wheelchairs or mobility aids. The Town Council does not currently have evidence of the extent of any differential impact at this location.

It is recommended that Herefordshire Council's road safety assessment considers pedestrian accessibility and the potential effects of any proposed measures on people with protected characteristics, particularly in relation to age and disability.

Environmental and sustainability considerations

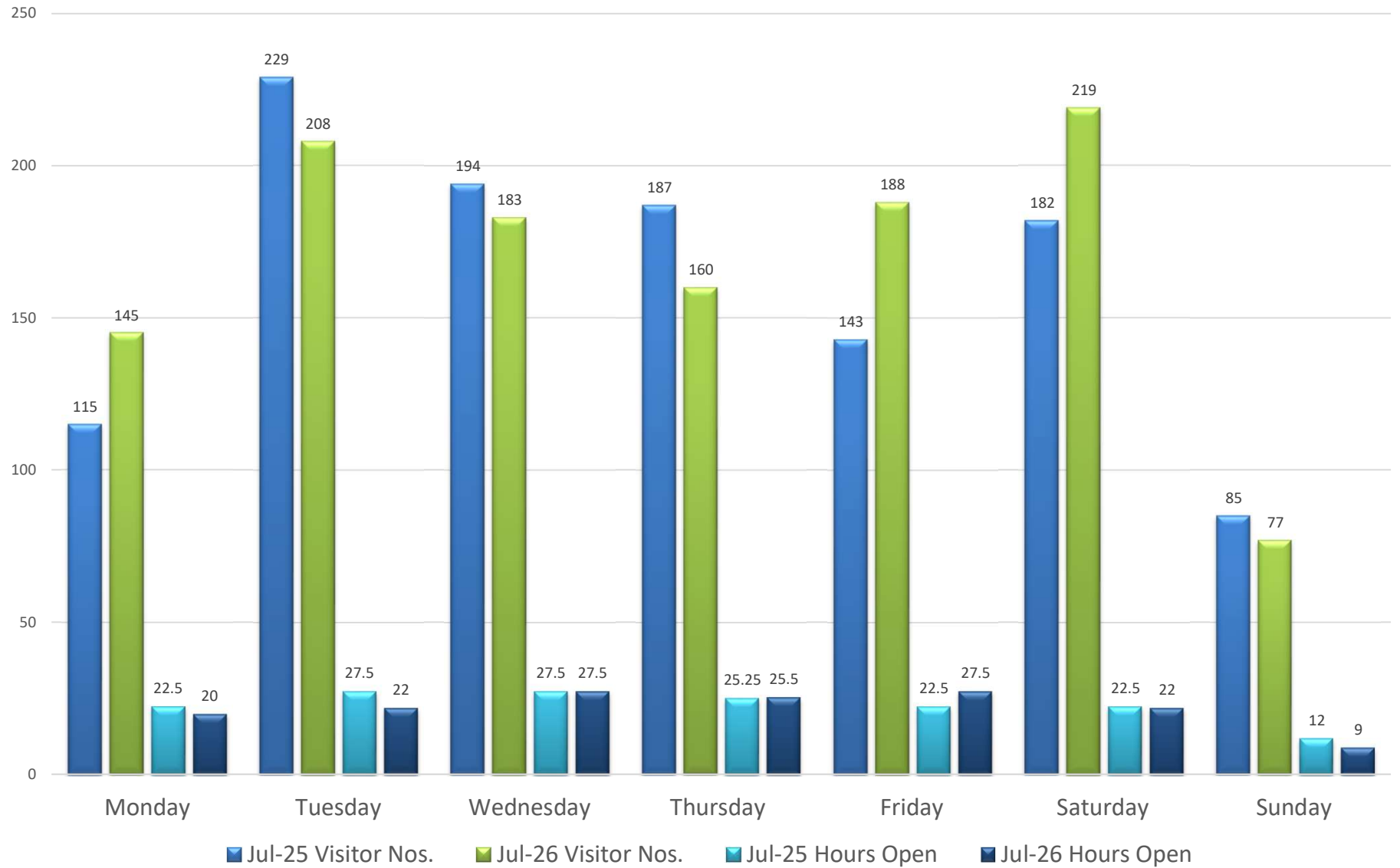
A safer and more accessible pavement may support walking, including journeys to local services and schools. Any proposed parking restrictions or changes to the road layout could also affect vehicle movements and parking on Bank Crescent and nearby streets.

The Town Council should ask Herefordshire Council to consider these effects as part of its assessment of possible measures. The environmental and sustainability implications cannot be determined until specific proposals are available.

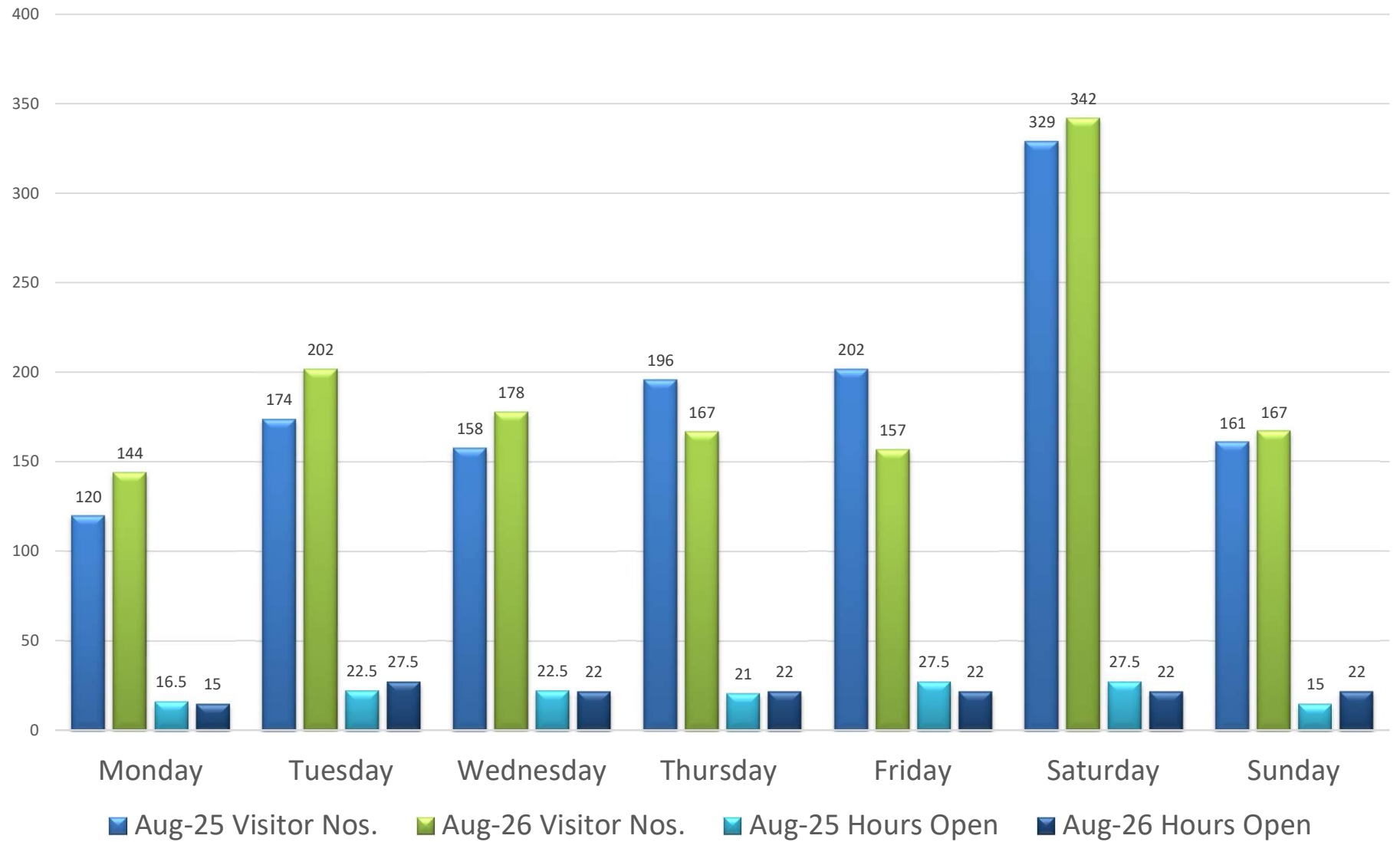
Recommendation

1. That Members support a request for Herefordshire Council to investigate measures to improve pedestrian and road safety at this location, including parking restrictions through a TRO if its assessment finds these appropriate.
2. Instruct the Clerk to convey the Town Council's position to Herefordshire Council's road safety team and the local Ward Councillor, and to request an update on the investigation and whether any earlier safety measures are recommended.

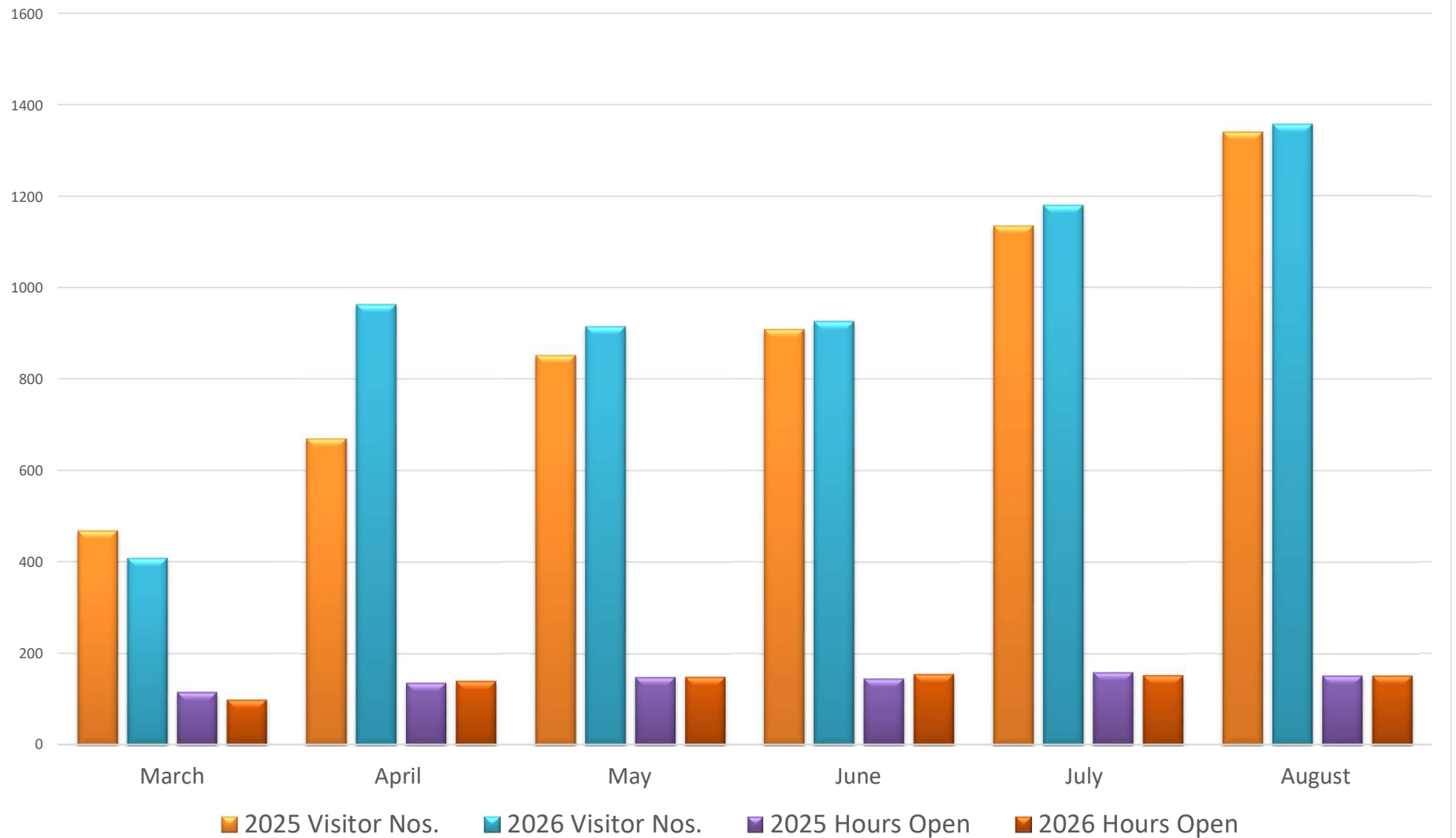
July 2025 & July 2026 Visitor Numbers Comparison, Painted Room



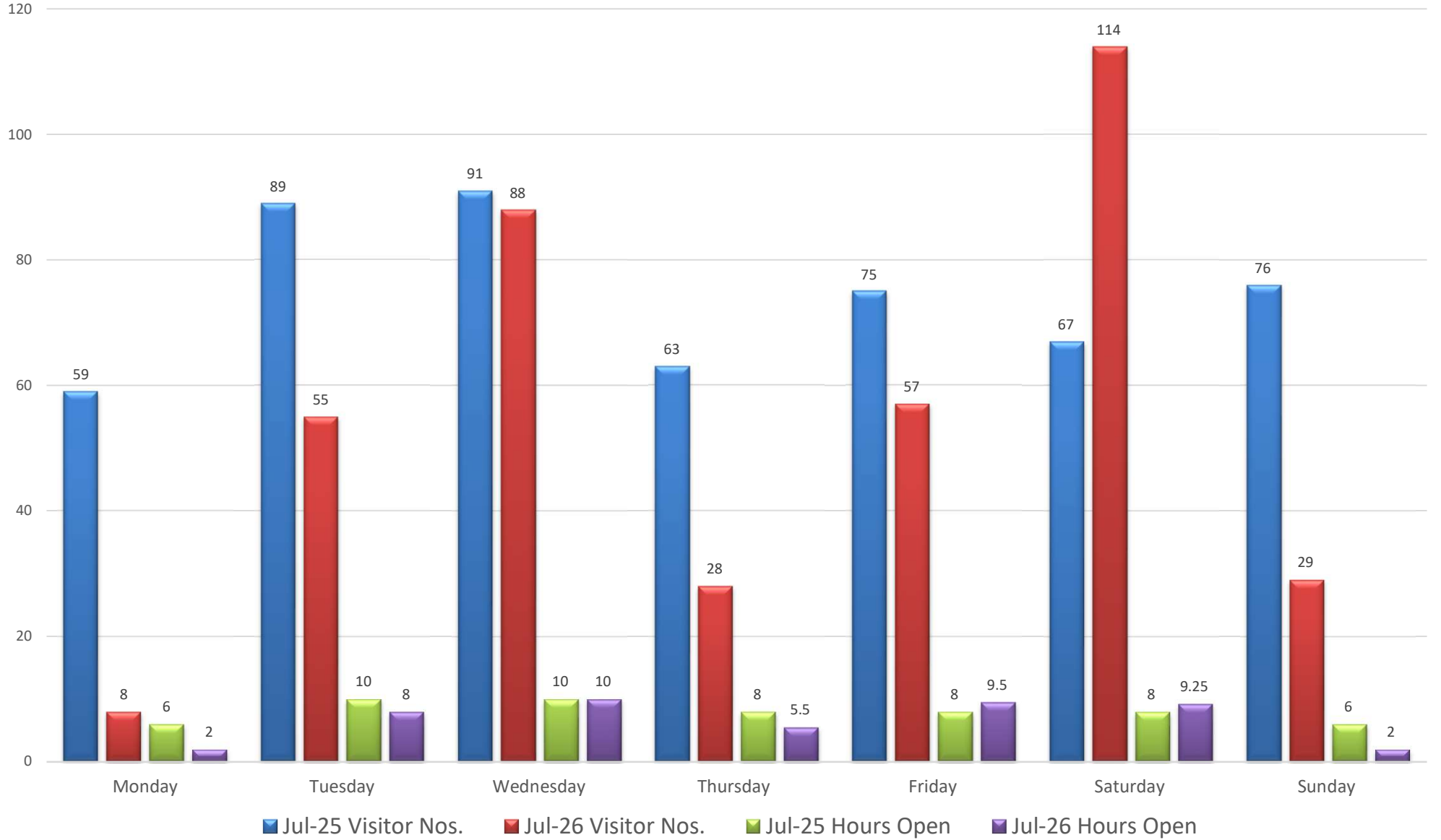
August 2025 & August 2026 Visitor Numbers Comparison, Painted Room



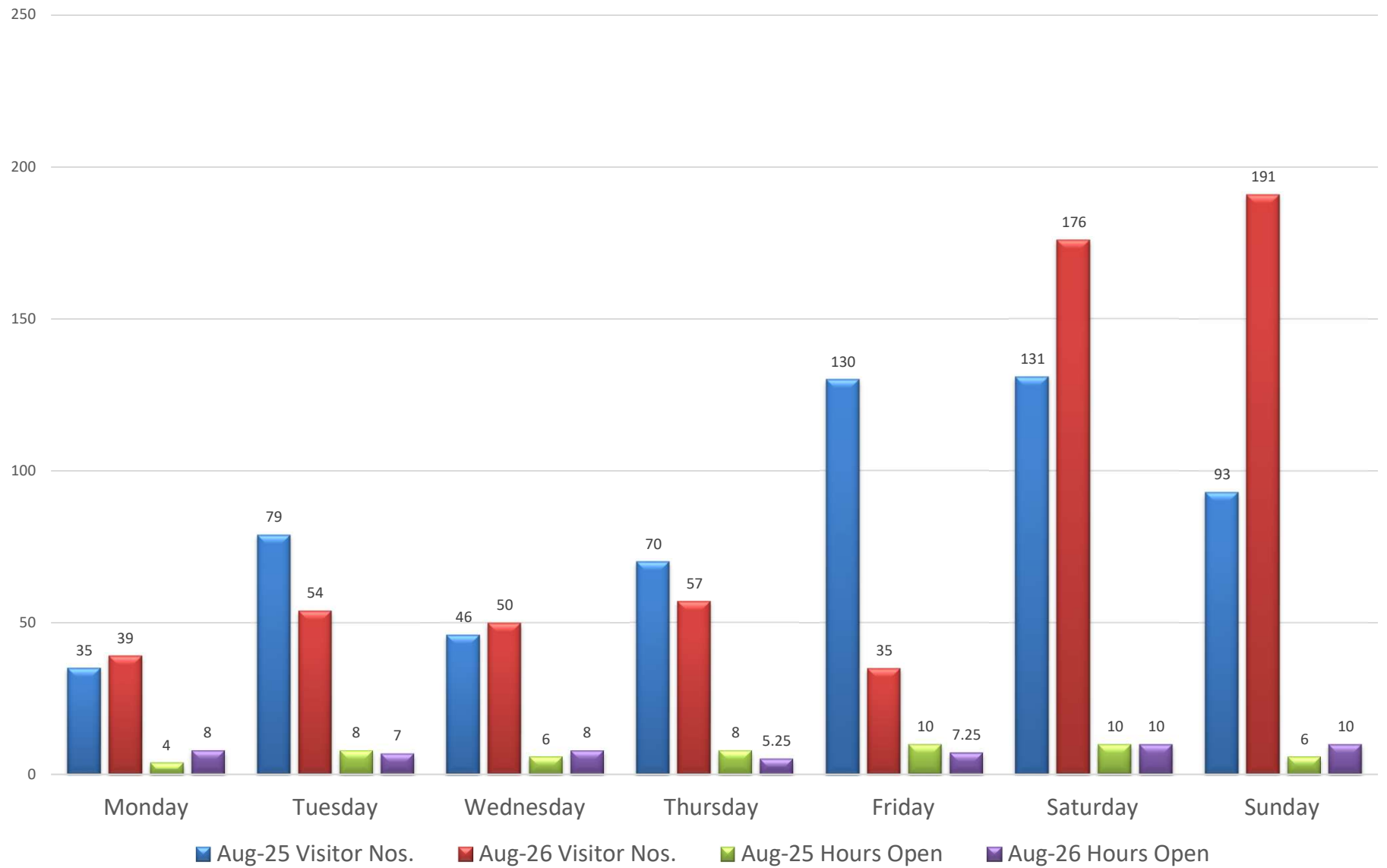
Painted Room 2025 & 2026 March to August Visitor Numbers Comparison



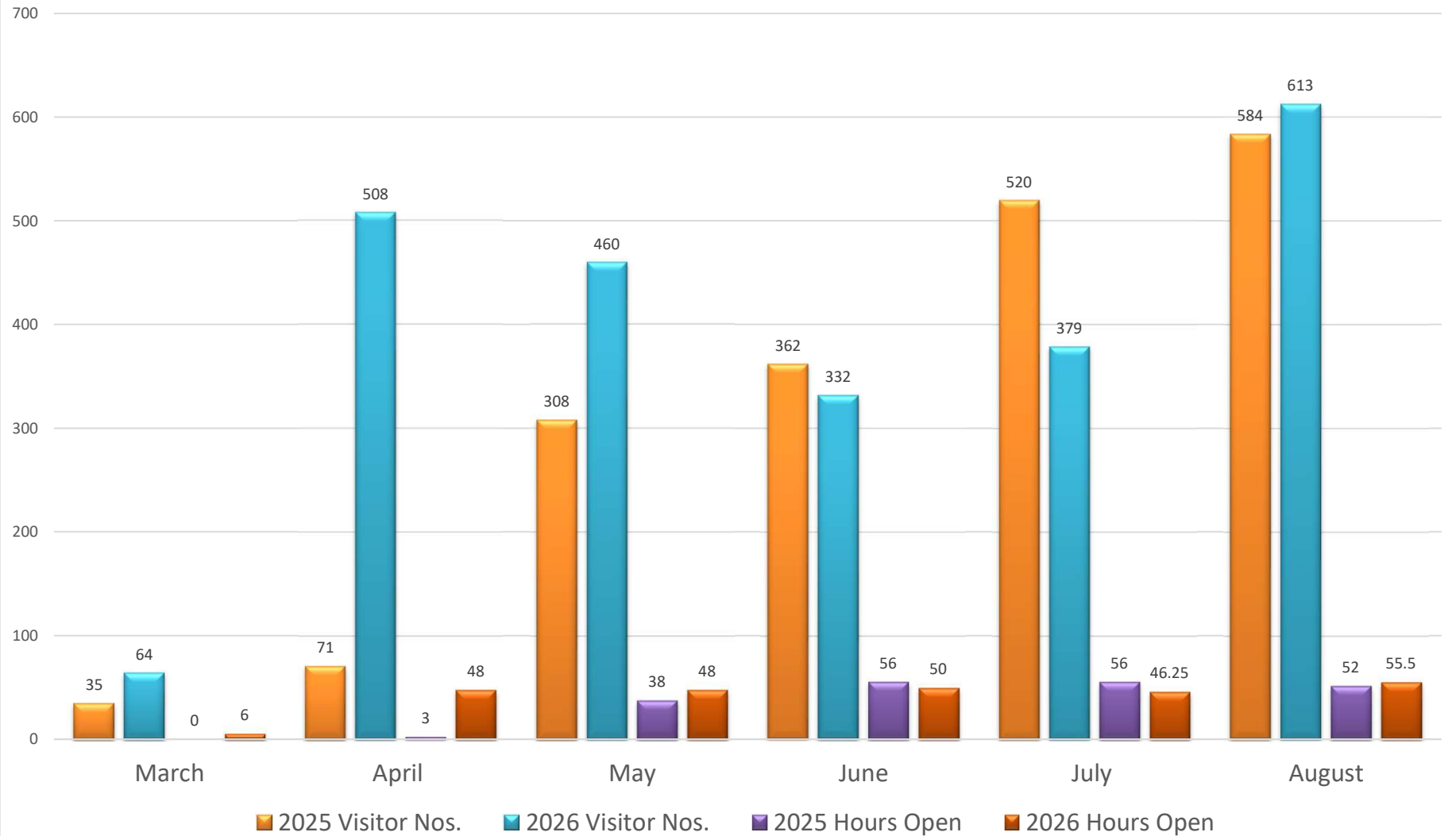
July 2025 and July 2026 Visitor numbers Comparison Market House



August 2025 and August 2026 Visitor numbers Comparison Market House



Market House 2025 and 2026 March to August Visitor Numbers Comparison



FULL COUNCIL	15 OCTOBER 2026	AGENDA ITEM: 22
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Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

REQUEST FOR STAKEHOLDER MEETING – GLADMAN DEVELOPMENTS LTD (LAND EAST OF DYMOCK ROAD)

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to ask Members to consider a request from Gladman Developments Ltd to meet with Town Council representatives regarding emerging residential proposals.

Detailed Information

Gladman Developments Ltd is currently preparing an outline planning application for a proposed development of up to 420 new homes on land east of Dymock Road, Ledbury. The developer has indicated that they are undertaking a programme of technical assessments and stakeholder engagement ahead of an anticipated submission this autumn.

Current Situation

The Town Council has received formal correspondence from Gladman Developments Ltd requesting a pre-submission meeting. The developer wishes to present their emerging proposals, provide an update on the technical work completed to date, and discuss matters of importance to the local community. They have requested that this meeting take place during the week beginning 26 October 2026.

Considerations

Community Engagement: Meeting with the developer at this stage provides an early opportunity for the Town Council to highlight local concerns, infrastructure pressures, and community priorities before the formal application is submitted.

Neutrality: Agreeing to a meeting does not constitute support for or endorsement of the development. It is an information-gathering exercise to ensure the Council is fully informed.

Recommendation and Decisions Required

Members are asked to:

Consider the request from Gladman Developments Ltd to meet regarding the land east of Dymock Road and whether Council would wish to meet with them during the week commencing 26 October 2026.

FULL COUNCIL	15 OCTOBER 2026	AGENDA ITEM:23
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Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

OUTCOME OF THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION REVIEW

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the final recommendations published by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on 29 September 2026 and the implications for Ledbury Town Council.

Review outcome

The Commission recommends retaining 53 councillors representing 53 single-member wards on Herefordshire Council. Boundaries will change in 17 wards, with 36 remaining unchanged.

Ledbury Town Council will retain 18 councillors, allocated as follows:

Town Council ward Councillors

Ledbury North	6
Ledbury South	6
Ledbury West	6
Total	18

Each Ledbury ward will also elect one Herefordshire councillor.

Implications for Ledbury

The Commission acknowledges the Town Council's support for Herefordshire Council's revised boundary proposal between Ledbury South and Ledbury West. The final boundary will follow New Street and the A449 to the county boundary, rather than turning onto Lilly Hall Lane, to provide a clearer boundary.

The Commission accepts a forecast electoral variance of 12% in Ledbury West by 2031, reflecting community ties and effective local government. Members should refer to the accompanying maps for the precise revised boundaries.

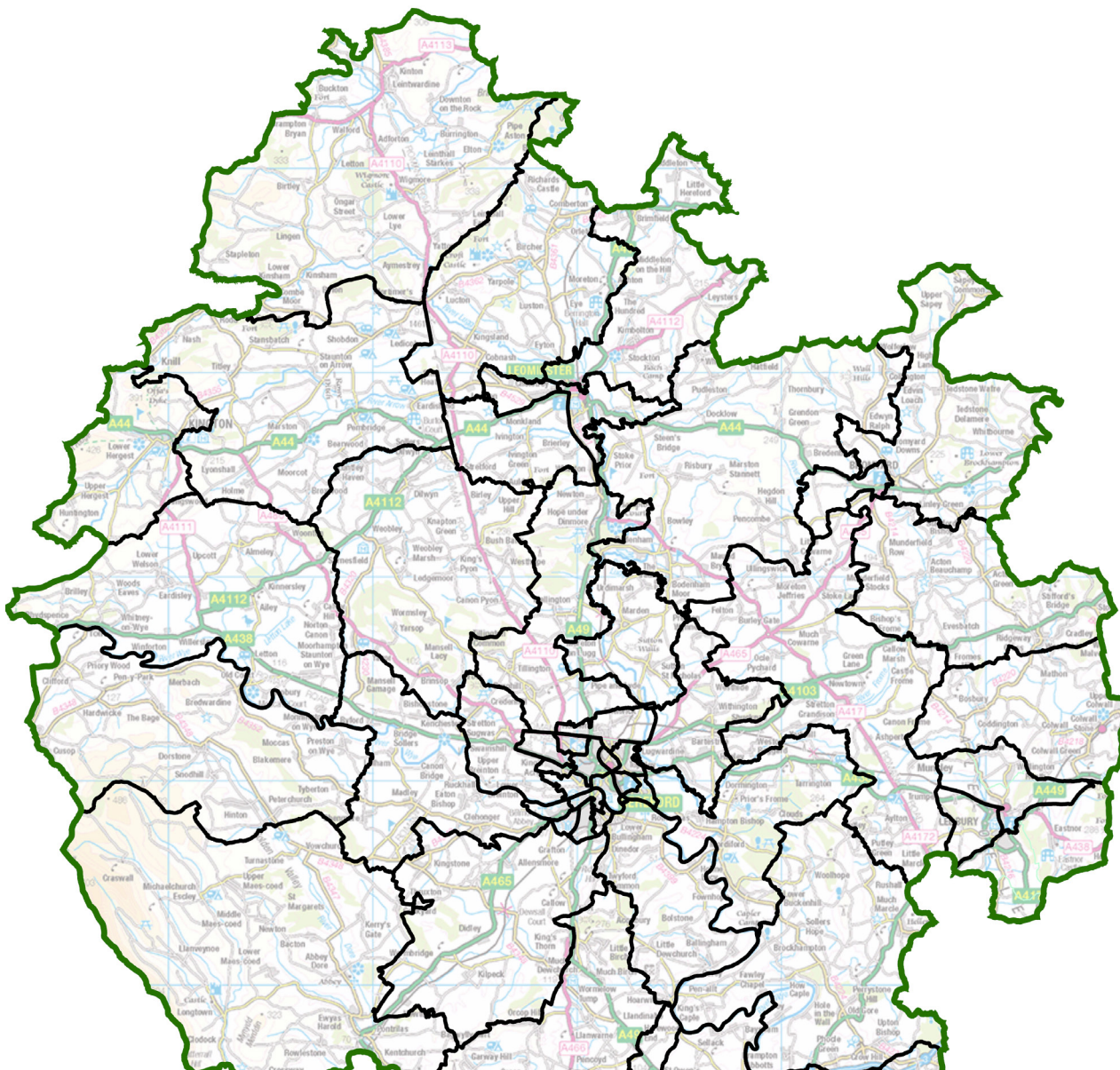
Members should note that the published maps show changes to the boundary between Ledbury North and Ledbury West which are not expressly described in the text of the final report.

Implementation and resources

The recommendations remain subject to parliamentary scrutiny of the implementing Order, with the new arrangements intended to apply at the elections on 6 May 2027.

Recommendation

1. That Members note the final recommendations and the revised electoral arrangements for Ledbury.
2. That Members note that the Town Council will retain 18 seats, comprising six councillors in each of its three wards.
3. That the Clerk seek written clarification from the Commission regarding the changes shown on the maps between Ledbury North and Ledbury West, and to liaise with Electoral Services regarding implementation and public information ahead of the May 2027 elections.



New electoral arrangements for Herefordshire Council Final Recommendations

September 2026

Translations and other formats:

To get this report in another language or in a large-print or Braille version, please contact the Local Government Boundary Commission for England at:

Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

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A note on our mapping:

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

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Introduction

Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament.¹ We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Bev Smith (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Dame Gillian Guy
- Wallace Sampson OBE
- Liz Treacy
- Janet Waggott
- Ailsa Irvine (Chief Executive)

What is an electoral review?

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed.
- How many wards or electoral divisions there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

4 When carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

5 Our task is to strike the best balance between these three considerations when making our recommendations.

¹ Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

6 More detail regarding the powers that we have, as well as further guidance and information about electoral reviews and the review process in general, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Why Herefordshire?

7 We are conducting a review of Herefordshire Council ('the Council') as its last review was completed in 2014, and we are required to review the electoral arrangements of every council in England 'from time to time'.² Additionally, some councillors currently represent many more or fewer electors than others. We describe this as 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where the number of electors per councillor is as even as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

8 This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Herefordshire are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of electors represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the authority.

Our proposals for Herefordshire

9 Herefordshire should be represented by 53 councillors, the same number as there are now.

10 Herefordshire should have 53 wards, the same number as there are now.

11 The boundaries of 17 wards should change; 36 will stay the same.

12 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Herefordshire.

How will the recommendations affect you?

13 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward, and, in some cases, which parish council ward you vote in. Your ward name may also change.

14 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the authority or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local

² Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 paragraph 56(1).

taxes, house prices or car and house insurance premiums, and we are not able to consider any representations which are based on these issues.

Review timetable

15 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Herefordshire. We then held a period of public consultation on warding patterns for the Council. The submissions received during the consultations have informed our draft and final recommendations.

16 The review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
18 November 2025	Number of councillors decided
25 November 2025	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
2 February 2026	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
28 April 2026	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
6 July 2026	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
29 September 2026	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and final recommendations

17 Legislation³ states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors⁴ there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

18 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create wards with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

19 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

	2025	2031
Electorate of Herefordshire	147,603	160,081
Number of councillors	53	53
Average number of electors per councillor	2,785	3,020

20 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All but four of our proposed wards (Bircher, Hagley, Ledbury West and Old Gore) for Herefordshire are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2031.

Submissions received

21 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

22 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2031, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2026. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of 8.5% by 2031.

23 We considered the information provided by the Council and were satisfied that the projected figures were the best available at the start of this review. During our warding arrangements consultation we received a submission from Councillor

³ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

⁴ Electors refer to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

Harvey, writing as a member of the public, who expressed some concerns with the forecasts provided by the Council. We discussed these concerns with officers at the Council who stated that the queries related to developments that are beyond the scope of this review because construction is not expected to start within the five-year forecasting period.

24 We considered the information provided by the Council and were satisfied that the projected figures were the best available at that time. These figures were therefore used to produce our draft recommendations.

25 During consultation on our draft recommendations, Herefordshire Council advised that forecast electors had been redistributed between Ledbury South and Ledbury West wards to reflect a revised boundary proposal. As this does not alter the overall electorate forecasts, we remain satisfied that the agreed forecasts represent the best available information and have used them to inform our final recommendations.

26 Our mapping tool uses geocoded electoral registers supplied by the Council to locate electors, by associating addresses with specific geographic coordinates. It considers each elector's location to produce precise elector counts for each ward. There can be very slight differences between the electorate figures published on our website at the beginning of the review and the electorate figures published in this report. However, these are very minor and do not impact on our recommendations.

Number of councillors

27 Herefordshire Council currently has 53 councillors. We looked at evidence provided by the Council and concluded that keeping this number the same would ensure the authority can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

28 We received several submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on warding patterns. The submission from Herefordshire Council reiterated its support for 53 councillors representing 53 wards. The remaining submissions were from local residents who argued for a reduction in the proposed number of councillors. One respondent specified a reduction of five or six councillors while the remainder did not suggest an alternative number. While carefully considering the submissions received, we were not persuaded that sufficient evidence was provided to justify an alternative number of councillors. On this basis, we based our draft recommendations on a 53-councillor council.

29 Prior to the start of the review, Herefordshire Council passed a resolution requesting that this be a single-member ward review. If a review is conducted on this basis, there is a presumption in legislation that the Council will have a uniform pattern of single-councillor wards. Accordingly, we will aim to deliver a pattern of

single-member wards. However, in all cases this consideration will not take precedence over our other statutory criteria, and we will not recommend a uniform pattern of single-member wards if, in our view or as is shown in evidence provided to us, it is not compatible with our other statutory criteria.

30 In their response to the draft recommendations the Council reiterated their support for 53 single-councillor wards. We received no other submissions about the number of councillors and have therefore retained 53 councillors in our final recommendations.

Ward boundaries consultation

31 We received 28 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These did not include any authority-wide proposals. The Council decided at that stage not to make a warding pattern proposal. The Council stated that it had asked councillors to respond to the Commission directly regarding the areas they represent. We received five submissions from local councillors, four submissions from parish and town councils and one submission from a political group. The remainder of submissions were from local residents.

32 Our draft recommendations were based on the existing electoral arrangements with a number of amendments made to wards to provide for electoral equality. The lack of a council-wide warding proposal meant that we received relatively limited community evidence across Herefordshire with only certain areas represented in the evidence received. We took into account the local evidence received, particularly where it provided information relating to community links and locally recognised boundaries.

33 We conducted a detailed virtual tour of the area prior to publishing our draft recommendations. This virtual tour of Herefordshire helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed. As detailed elsewhere in this report, we later visited Herefordshire in person to examine the proposed boundaries on the ground before formulating our final recommendations.

34 Our draft recommendations were for 53 one-councillor wards. We considered that our draft recommendations would provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

Draft recommendations consultation

35 We received 27 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included a submission from Herefordshire Council with comments on a number of wards. We also received submissions from 16 parish,

town and district representatives, and 10 local residents. The majority of the submissions focused on specific areas, particularly our proposals for Bircher and Mortimer wards, and for Hagley and Three Crosses wards.

Final recommendations

36 Our final recommendations are for 53 one-councillor wards. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

37 Our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations with modifications to Bircher and Mortimer wards, Bishops Frome & Cradley, Hagley and Three Crosses wards, and Llangarron and Old Gore wards. We also recommend changes to the wards in the Ledbury area and to Whitecross and Widemarsh wards in central Hereford.

38 We have had regard to our duty under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023), which requires public bodies to seek to further the purposes of National Landscapes. In relation to the designated landscapes within Herefordshire, including the Wye Valley National Landscape and the Malvern Hills National Landscape, we are satisfied that our recommended wards provide councillors with a coherent geographic framework through which they can understand and discharge their responsibilities in respect of these protected landscapes.

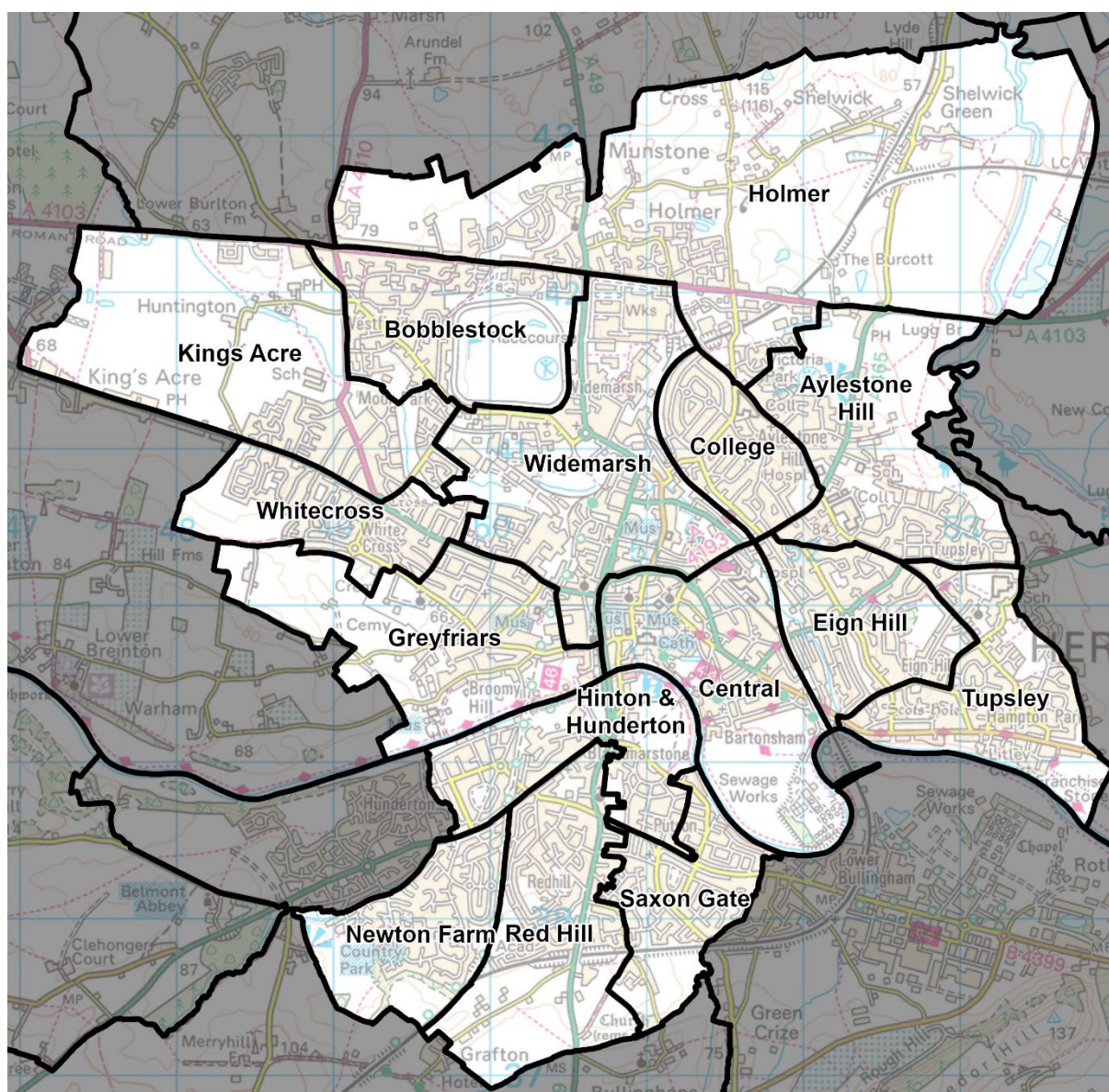
39 The tables and maps on pages 9–24 detail our final recommendations for each area of Herefordshire. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁵ criteria of:

- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

40 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 32 and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁵ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Hereford



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2031
Aylestone Hill	1	-9%
Bobblestock	1	-2%
Central	1	3%
College	1	-4%
Eign Hill	1	-3%
Greyfriars	1	-10%
Hinton & Hunderton	1	4%
Holmer	1	5%
Kings Acre	1	-8%
Newton Farm	1	8%
Red Hill	1	2%

Saxon Gate	1	1%
Tupsley	1	-9%
Whitecross	1	-5%
Widemarsh	1	-6%

Hereford – North of the River Wye (Aylestone Hill, Bobblestock, Central, College, Eign Hill, Greyfriars, Holmer, Kings Acre, Tupsley, Whitecross and Widemarsh)

41 Our final recommendations for this part of Hereford are based on the draft recommendations, subject to a small amendment to the boundary between Whitecross and Widemarsh wards. This change is based on the evidence received during consultation and on evidence gathered during our visit to the area.

42 We received seven submissions that mentioned wards in this part of the city. Herefordshire Council did not support our recommended boundary between Greyfriars and Widemarsh wards. It argued that the proposed boundary, which follows Barton Road and Barton Yard rather than Eign Street, did not reflect the identities and interests of the community in this area. The Council did not put forward an alternative to our recommended boundary. Our boundary was intended to balance the three statutory criteria of ensuring good electoral equality, reflecting community identities and interests and promoting effective and convenient local government. If the ward boundary followed Eign Street, this would result in an electoral variance of 14% for Widemarsh ward.

43 Councillor Andrews (Widemarsh ward) argued that the current boundary of Eign Street provided a strong and obvious boundary that divided two wards with little community connections. They stated that, if it was considered necessary to include more electors in the ward, the part of Whitecross Road from Vowles Close up to and including Baggallay Street would be a more appropriate area, given that the small housing estate at the end of Baggallay Street is already in Widemarsh ward. Councillor Toynbee (Greyfriars ward) stated that, while our recommendations made Greyfriars ward less coherent, they understood the need to provide for electoral equality in both wards. Councillor Foxton, who represents Eign Hill ward, wrote in support of our draft recommendations for that ward.

44 A local resident argued that including the more affluent properties to the west of the A465 Aylestone Hill road in Aylestone Hill ward would create a social imbalance and not accurately reflect their connection to Victoria Park. They suggested that the area in question be included in Victoria Park ward. They also proposed that Netherwood Close, which is currently in Backbury ward and Hampton Bishop parish, be added to Aylestone Hill ward. Two local residents suggested that the Mantella Drive area be included in a Hereford-based ward. This area is also currently in Backbury ward and Hampton Bishop parish. We also received some suggested name changes to wards in Hereford, with a local resident suggesting Elgar for

Central ward, adding Edgar Street to the name of Widemarsh ward, Tom Spring for Backbury ward and adding Hill to the name of College ward.

45 We visited this part of Hereford on our tour of the authority to examine the proposed changes put forward to us during consultation. As a consequence, we propose to make some amendments to the boundary between Whitecross and Widemarsh wards. We visited the small housing estate mentioned by Councillor Andrews and concluded that all of this estate should be moved from Widemarsh to Whitecross ward. In our view, it is currently isolated from adjoining communities in Widemarsh with no direct road access to the rest of the ward. We have decided not to adopt the suggestion to move Baggallay Street into Widemarsh ward as we are not persuaded that this would reflect the community identities and interests of electors in this area.

46 We have decided to confirm our draft recommendations to change the boundary between Greyfriars and Widemarsh wards as final. While we note the view that Eign Street provides a strong ward boundary, we were not persuaded that sufficient evidence had been provided to justify the electoral variance of 14% that would result if our recommended change were not made.

47 We do not propose to make any changes to Aylestone Hill ward based on the submissions received. In particular, the relative affluence or otherwise of a specific area does not, of itself, justify its transfer to an adjoining ward. Additionally, we do not propose to change the boundaries of Aylestone Hill ward to include Netherwood Close or Tupsley ward to include the Mantella Drive area. Whilst we accept that these areas are likely to consider themselves part of Hereford, they are currently part of Hampton Bishop parish. To include these electors in either Aylestone Hill or Tupsley wards would require the creation of small parish wards for Hampton Bishop parish, which would contain relatively few electors. We are not persuaded that this approach would promote effective and convenient local government for Hampton Bishop parish. We considered the name changes suggested for the wards in and around Hereford but we do not propose to make any changes to what we consider are long-established and well recognised names.

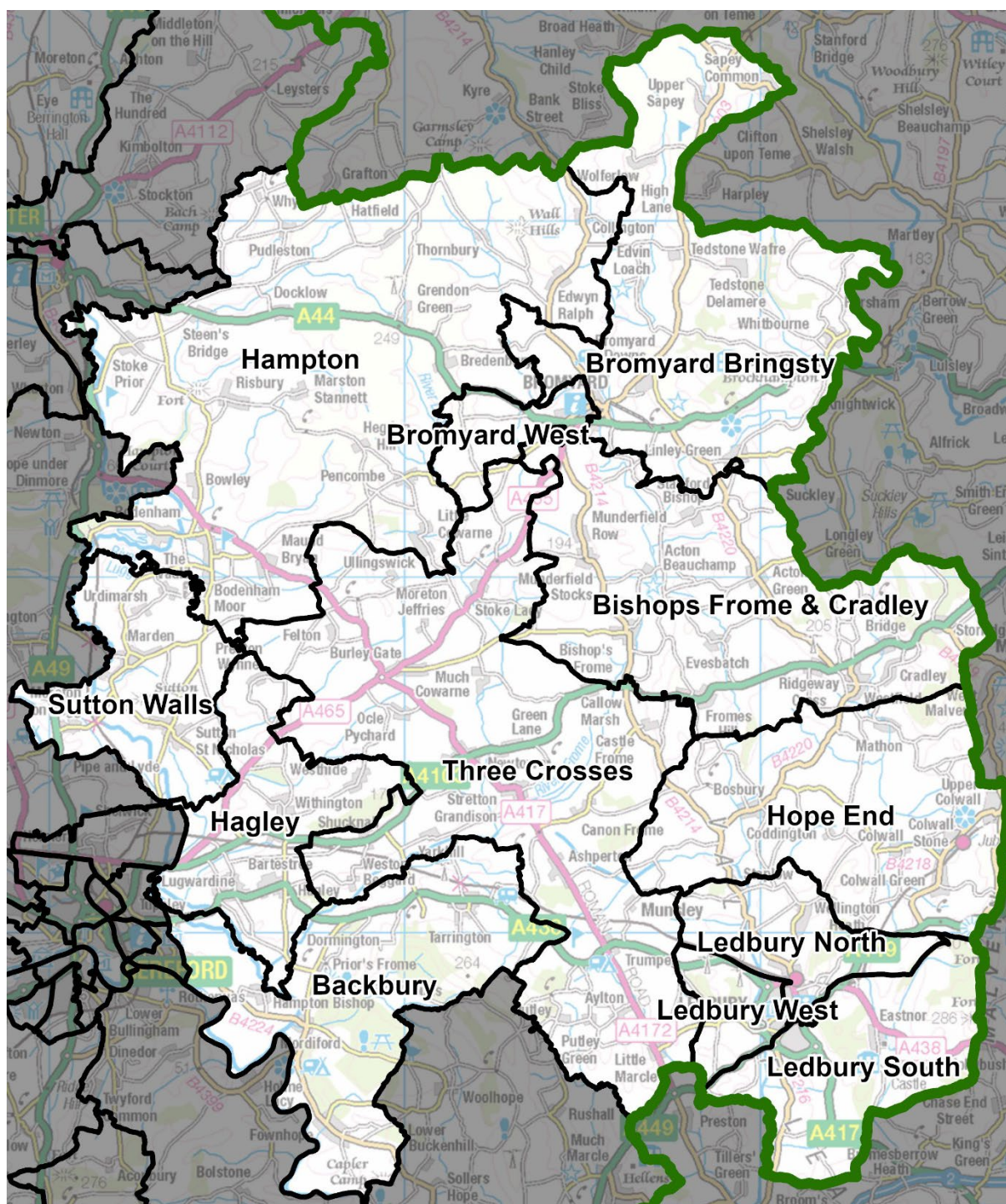
48 Other than the change to the boundary between Whitecross and Widemarsh wards, we propose to confirm our draft recommendations for the remainder of the wards in this area as final. We are content that our recommendation effectively balances our three statutory criteria and will ensure that all of the recommended wards will have good forecast electoral equality by 2031.

Hereford – South of the River Wye (Hinton & Hunderton, Newton Farm, Red Hill and Saxon Gate)

49 We received no submissions that mentioned these four wards during either consultation. We are satisfied that our recommended wards will effectively balance

our three statutory criteria and note that they are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2031. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final. Our recommended wards are forecast to have electoral variances of 4%, 8%, 2% and 1% respectively, by 2031.

North East Herefordshire



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2031
Backbury	1	-1%
Bishops Frome & Cradley	1	-6%
Bromyard Bringsty	1	8%
Bromyard West	1	-9%
Hagley	1	14%

Hampton	1	1%
Hope End	1	6%
Ledbury North	1	8%
Ledbury South	1	3%
Ledbury West	1	12%
Sutton Walls	1	-5%
Three Crosses	1	4%

Backbury, Bromyard Bringsty, Bromyard West, Hampton, Hope End and Sutton Walls

50 In our draft recommendations, we retained the existing electoral arrangements for this area. We received no submissions that referred to these wards during the consultation on our draft recommendations. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final.

51 Our final recommendations are for the six wards of Backbury, Bromyard Bringsty, Bromyard West, Hampton, Hope End and Sutton Walls. These wards are forecast to have electoral variances of -1%, 8%, -9%, 1%, 6% and -5% respectively, by 2031.

Bishops Frome & Cradley, Hagley and Three Crosses

52 The existing Hagley ward was forecast to have 14% more electors per councillor than the authority average by 2031. To reduce this level of electoral inequality, as part of our draft recommendations we proposed to move the parishes of Preston Wynne and Westhide from Hagley ward to Three Crosses ward. This would have reduced the electoral variance in Hagley ward from 14% to 8% by 2031.

53 In response to our draft recommendations, we received a number of submissions in objection. Herefordshire Council objected to our recommendations for all three wards on the basis that they did not reflect community ties in the area. It stated that Stoke Lacy parish did not have strong links to Bishops Frome but did have strong community ties to Much Cowarne and the Ocle group of parishes, which reflected a 'longstanding social, charitable, ecclesiastical and cultural relationship'.

54 The Council added that Westhide and Preston Wynne parishes should not be excluded from Hagley ward as they form part of a grouped parish council with Withington. The Council therefore argued that these communities share governance structures, interests and close community relationships, and a warding pattern that separated these parishes would break those ties. It added further evidence that both Westhide and Preston Wynne look to Withington for their community facilities such as Withington Village Hall which is used by residents in all three communities. The Council argued that the improvement in electoral equality under our draft

recommendations was at the expense of reflecting community links across the three wards.

55 Councillor Lester (Three Crosses ward), Councillor Powell (Hagley ward), Stoke Lacy Parish Council and Withington Group Parish Council all opposed the draft recommendations for these wards and gave similar community evidence to that submitted by the Council.

56 Having carefully considered the submissions received, we have decided to revert to the existing warding pattern as part of our final recommendations for this area. This will retain the parishes of Preston Wynne and Westhide in Hagley ward, and Stoke Lacy parish in Three Crosses ward.

57 Our final recommendations will mean that Hagley ward will be forecast to have 14% more electors per councillor than the average for Herefordshire by 2031. However, we are persuaded that the evidence offered in the submissions justifies this relatively high electoral variance in order to reflect community identities and interests. We are satisfied that the strong community ties shared between Preston Wynne and Westhide parishes and Withington parish, as well as those shared between Stoke Lacy and Much Cowarne parish, will be reflected in our final recommendations.

58 Our final recommendations are for the wards of Bishop Frome & Cradley, Hagley and Three Crosses. These wards are forecast to have electoral variances of -6%, 14% and 4% respectively by 2031.

Ledbury North, Ledbury South and Ledbury West

59 Our draft recommendations for Ledbury were based on proposed modifications submitted by Ledbury Town Council. We made some further modifications to these proposals to provide for electoral equality.

60 We received two submissions in response to our draft recommendations for this area. Herefordshire Council proposed a revised boundary between Ledbury South and Ledbury West wards based on a small recalculation of the housing development forecasts in the area. These recalculations did not change the overall forecast but changed the number of forecast electors between Ledbury South and Ledbury West wards by a small amount. The Council's revised boundary would follow New Street, then the A449 before turning north onto Lilly Hall Lane. Ledbury Town Council supported the Council's revised proposal.

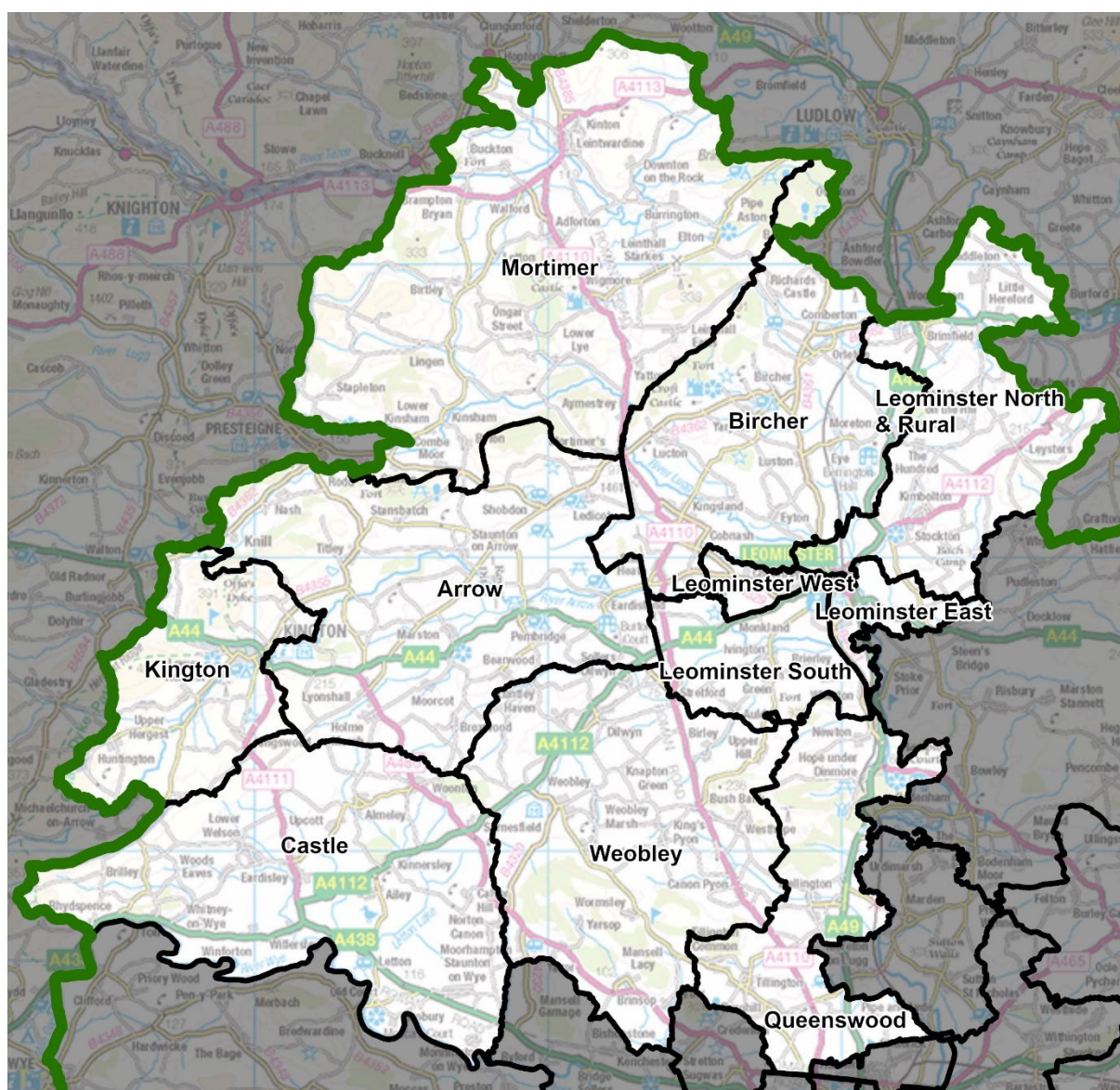
61 Having considered the submissions received and having visited the area as part of our tour of Herefordshire, we propose to adopt the changes put forward by Herefordshire Council as part of our final recommendations, subject to a small amendment. We propose that the boundary between Ledbury South and Ledbury

West follow New Street and then the A449 to the county boundary. However, we do not recommend that the boundary follow Lilly Hall Lane as we consider that using the A449 will provide for a clearer and more identifiable ward boundary.

62 Under the final recommendations Ledbury West ward would have an electoral variance of 12%. While this is relatively high, we consider it is justified by the evidence provided that the proposed changes will promote effective and convenient local government and reflect local community ties in Ledbury.

63 Our final recommendations are for the three wards of Ledbury North, Ledbury South and Ledbury West. These wards are forecast to have electoral variances of 8%, 3% and 12% respectively, by 2031.

North West Herefordshire



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2031
Arrow	1	6%
Bircher	1	15%
Castle	1	-8%
Kington	1	-9%
Leominster East	1	4%
Leominster North & Rural	1	9%
Leominster South	1	-8%
Leominster West	1	-8%
Mortimer	1	-3%
Queenswood	1	-3%
Weobley	1	3%

Bircher and Mortimer

64 As part of our draft recommendations, we moved the parish of Richards Castle from Bircher ward to Mortimer ward. We proposed this as the existing Bircher ward was forecast to have 15% more electors per councillor than the average for Herefordshire by 2031. Our view was that no evidence had been received to justify retaining the existing ward with this high electoral variance.

65 In response to our draft recommendations, we received eight submissions that mentioned these wards. These were from Councillor Hurcomb (Bircher ward), Councillor Atkins (Richards Castle parish), Councillor O'Sullivan (Yarpole Group Parish Council), Orleton Parish Council, Richards Castle Parish Council, Wigmore Group Parish Council, Yarpole Group Parish Council and a local resident. The submission from the local resident requested a change to the parish boundaries in the area.

66 The respondents objected to the inclusion of Richards Castle parish in Mortimer ward. They stressed that Richards Castle has strong ties with parishes to its south, in particular Orleton parish and the Yarpole group of parishes. They argued that there were no direct links between Richards Castle parish and the remainder of Mortimer ward. In particular, they noted there was no direct road link between the two areas which are predominantly hilly and heavily wooded. It was also stated that Richards Castle looks to Orleton for a number of its community and leisure facilities, and that the two parishes share a neighbourhood plan.

67 Having considered the submissions received and having visited the area as part of our tour of Herefordshire, we propose to modify our draft recommendations and place Richards Castle parish in Bircher ward. This will mean that Bircher ward and Mortimer ward will retain their existing boundaries. It will also mean that Bircher ward will have an electoral variance of 15% more electors per councillor by 2031. While this variance is relatively high, we consider that sufficient evidence has been received to justify it. In particular, we found the evidence relating to the community ties between Richards Castle parish and the rest of Bircher ward to be persuasive. We also consider our recommended change will promote effective and convenient local government by better reflecting local road links.

68 We did consider whether the high electoral variance in Bircher ward could be avoided by recommending a two-councillor Bircher & Mortimer ward. While this option would result in an electoral variance of 6%, we did not consider that evidence had been received to justify moving away from a uniform pattern of single-member wards, particularly given that Herefordshire Council has formally requested that this be a single-councillor ward review. Whilst we reserve the right to recommend multi-member wards should we be unable to effectively balance our statutory criteria, we are content that our criteria are reflected in a single-councillor pattern for this area, in spite of the relatively high electoral variance.

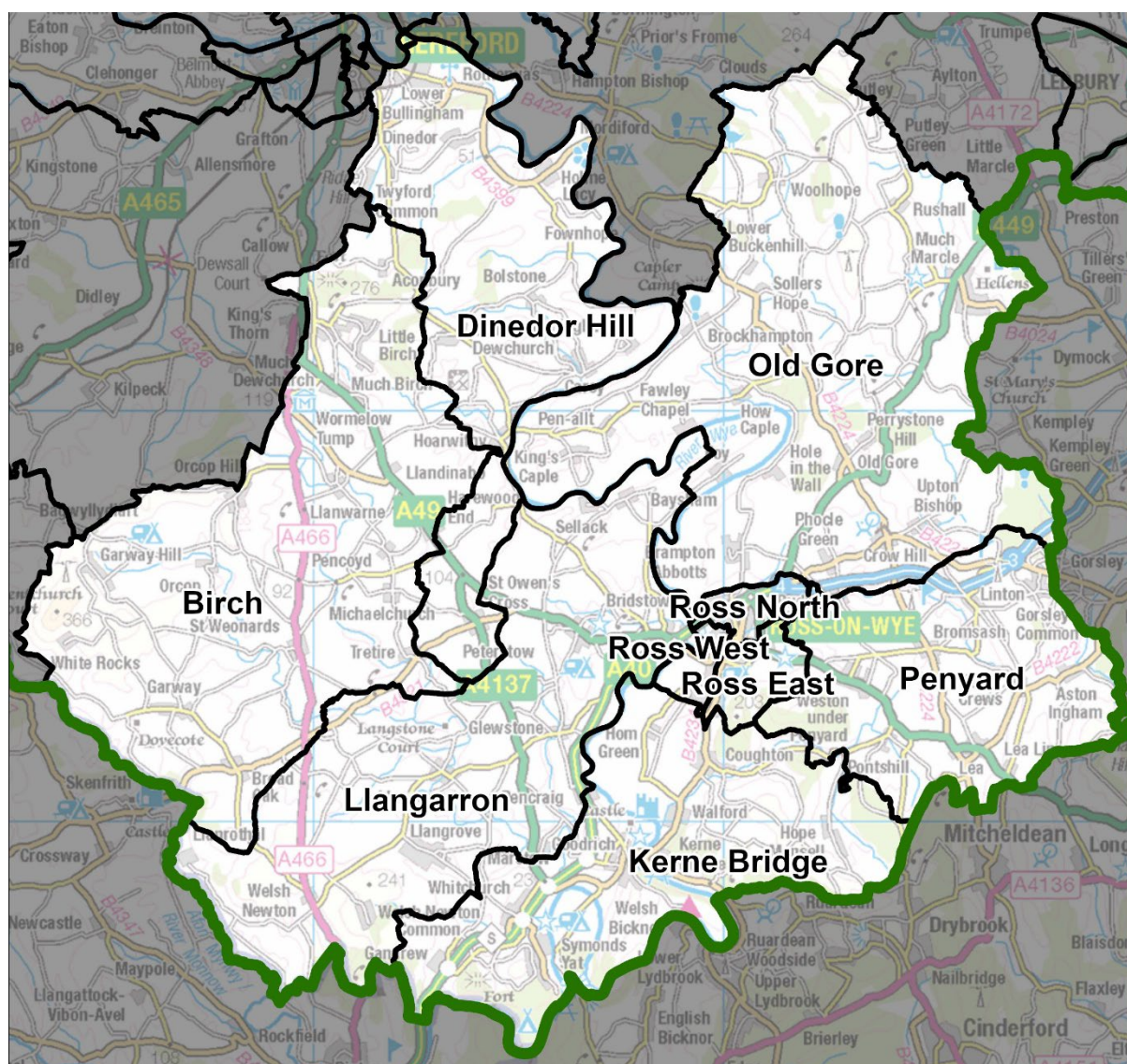
69 Our final recommendations are for the two wards of Bircher and Mortimer which are forecast to have electoral variances of 15% and -3% respectively, by 2031.

Arrow, Castle, Kington, Leominster East, Leominster North & Rural, Leominster South, Leominster West, Queenswood and Weobley

70 We received no submissions relating to these nine wards as part of the consultation on our draft recommendations. All nine of these wards were unchanged from their existing boundaries under our recommendations.

71 We therefore propose to confirm our draft recommendations as final for this area. We propose the nine wards of Arrow, Castle, Kington, Leominster East, Leominster North & Rural, Leominster South, Leominster West, Queenswood and Weobley. These wards will have forecast electoral variances of 6%, -8%, -9%, 4%, 9%, -8%, -8%, -3% and 3% respectively, by 2031.

South East Herefordshire



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2031
Birch	1	-6%
Dinedor Hill	1	6%
Kerne Bridge	1	0%
Llangarron	1	3%
Old Gore	1	-12%
Penyard	1	4%
Ross East	1	1%
Ross North	1	9%
Ross West	1	10%

Birch, Dinedor Hill, Kerne Bridge, Llangarron, Old Gore and Penyard

72 We received three submissions in relation to this area. Two of the submissions (both from local residents) related to the inclusion of Hope Mansell parish in Kerne Bridge ward. The other submission, also from a local resident, related to the inclusion of Sellack parish in Old Gore ward. Of the two submissions relating to Hope Mansell parish, one was in support of its inclusion in Kerne Bridge ward. The other submission opposed this stating that the parish did not have the same characteristics as the other parishes in the ward, noting it was not named as part of the same area in the Domesday Book. It was also noted that the parish was not part of the Wye Valley National Landscape or a River Wye adjacent parish. The submission relating to Sellack parish stated that it should remain in Llangarron ward so that the River Wye remained the northern boundary of Llangarron ward.

73 We have carefully considered the submissions received and visited the area as part of our tour of Herefordshire. We have decided to confirm our draft recommendations for Kerne Bridge and Penyard wards as final as we are satisfied that including Hope Mansell parish in Kerne Bridge ward provides the best balance of our statutory criteria. In particular, it provides for electoral equality for both wards and whilst it is outside the Wye Valley National Landscape, that is also true of parts of the neighbouring parish of Walford, which we identified Hope Mansell parish as sharing characteristics with.

74 In respect of Llangarron and Old Gore wards, we have decided to depart from our draft recommendations and revert to the existing warding arrangements for this area, with Sellack parish remaining in Llangarron ward. When we visited Sellack parish we noted that it had no connections to Old Gore ward and that the River Wye formed a significant barrier between the two areas. This proposal results in Old Gore ward having 12% fewer electors per councillor than the average for Herefordshire by 2031. However, we consider this relatively high variance is justified given the community links between Sellack parish and Llangarron ward, and the strength of the River Wye as a barrier. We received no submissions that mentioned Birch and Dinedor Hill wards, and we therefore confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final.

75 Our final recommendations are for the six wards of Birch, Dinedor Hill, Kerne Bridge, Llangarron, Old Gore and Penyard. These wards are forecast to have electoral variances of -6%, 6%, 0%, 3%, -12% and 4% respectively, by 2031.

Ross East, Ross North and Ross West

76 We received three submissions that referenced wards in Ross-on-Wye. A local resident had interpreted the draft recommendations for Ross-on-Wye as having the town represented by a single councillor, which they supported. However, our draft recommendations were for three single-member wards for the town. Another local resident suggested that Brampton Abbots parish be included in Ross North ward but

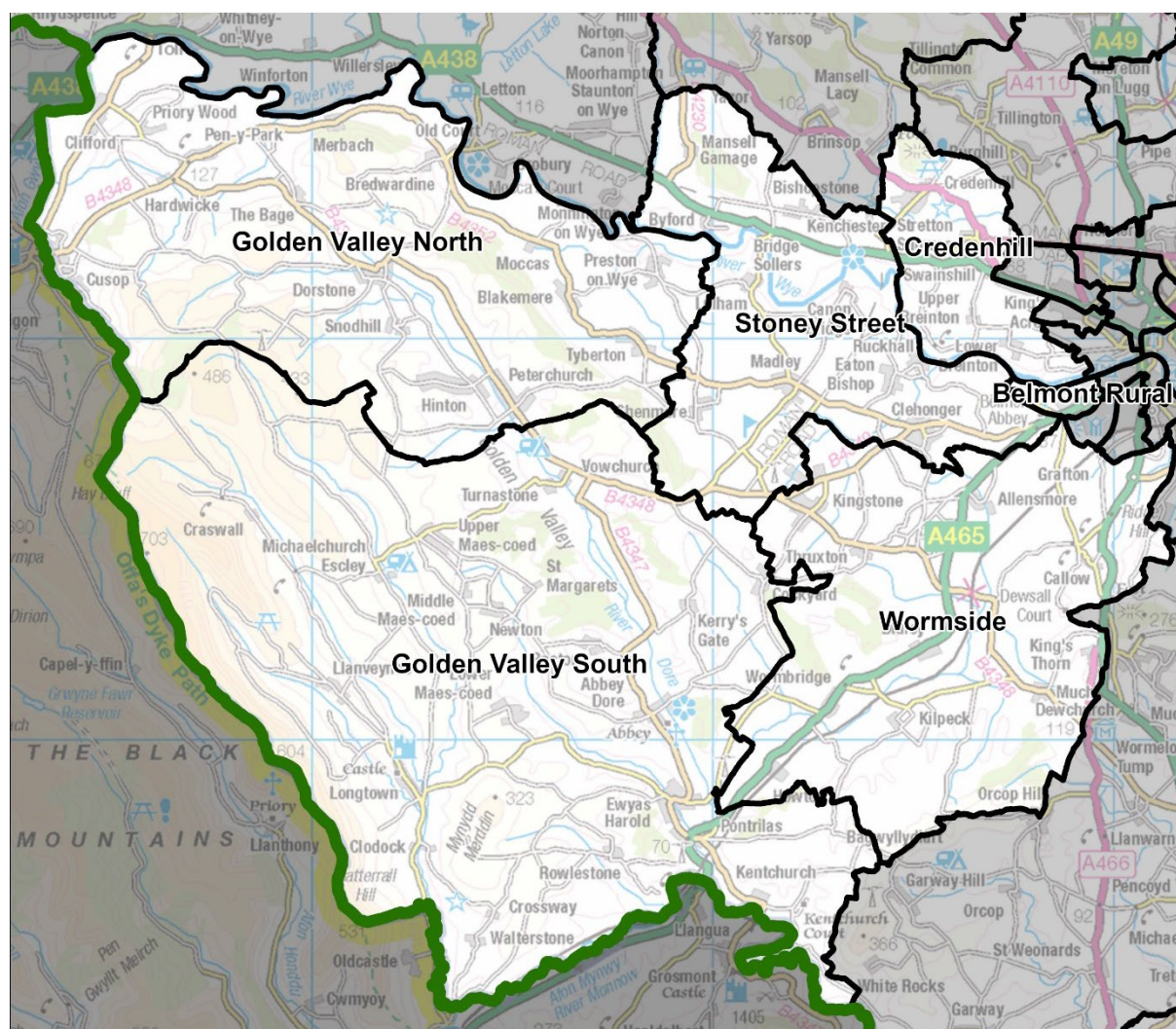
did not propose how this could be achieved while ensuring good electoral equality. It should be noted that this proposal would result in electoral variances of 19% in Ross North ward and -22% in Old Gore ward. We also received a submission from Councillor Delves of Ross-on-Wye Town Council who proposed some changes to ward boundaries in the south of the town. Specifically, this related to open space to the south of Redwood Close and Watling Street, which they stated is subject to planning for a residential development. They also stated that it would be preferable to have the town centre represented by more than a single district councillor.

77 We have carefully considered the submissions received but propose to make no changes to our draft recommendations for wards in Ross-on-Wye. As mentioned above, the parish of Brampton Abbots cannot be included in Ross North ward as it will result in poor electoral equality. We also note that, under our recommendations, the town centre of Ross-on-Wye is represented by three Herefordshire councillors and not one, as implied in the resident's submission.

78 In respect of Councillor Delves submission, it should be noted that the southern boundary of our proposed Ross West ward follows an existing parish boundary. To amend Herefordshire ward boundaries in this area would necessitate the creation of a parish ward for Walford parish and, based on the five-year electorate forecasts received from Herefordshire Council, the site in question is not subject to any development within this five-year period. Therefore, to adopt this proposal would require the creation of a parish ward that would contain no electors. This arrangement would therefore not provide for effective and convenient local government for Walford parish, and we have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendations for this specific area as final.

79 Our final recommendations for Ross-on-Wye are for the three wards of Ross East, Ross North and Ross West, which are forecast to have electoral variances of 1%, 9% and 10% respectively, by 2031.

South West Herefordshire



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2031
Belmont Rural	1	-3%
Credenhill	1	-9%
Golden Valley North	1	-8%
Golden Valley South	1	-6%
Stoney Street	1	4%
Wormside	1	7%

Belmont Rural, Credenhill, Golden Valley North, Golden Valley South, Stoney Street and Wormside

80 We received no submissions during consultation that referred to these wards. Our draft recommendations for this area retained the existing boundaries of all six wards. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendations for this area as final.

81 Our final recommendations are for the wards of Belmont Rural, Credenhill, Golden Valley North, Golden Valley South, Stoney Street and Wormside. These wards are forecast to have electoral variances of -3%, -9%, -8%, -6%, 4% and 7% respectively, by 2031.

Conclusions

82 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in Herefordshire, referencing the 2025 and 2031 electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and wards. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found in Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided in Appendix B.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2025	2031
Number of councillors	53	53
Number of electoral wards	53	53
Average number of electors per councillor	2,785	3,020
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	9	4
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	1	0

Final recommendations

Herefordshire should be made up of 53 councillors serving 53 single-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Herefordshire Council.

You can also view our final recommendations for Herefordshire Council on our interactive maps at www.lgbce.org.uk

Parish electoral arrangements

83 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

84 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements where these are as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority warding arrangements. However, Herefordshire Council has powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

85 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Hereford, Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye.

86 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Hereford parish.

Final recommendations

Hereford City Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing 15 wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Hereford Aylestone Hill	1
Hereford Bobblestock	1
Hereford Central	2
Hereford College	1
Hereford Eign Hill	1
Hereford Greyfriars	1
Hereford Hinton & Hunderton	2
Hereford Kings Acre	1
Hereford Newton Farm	2
Hereford Red Hill	1
Hereford Saxon Gate	1
Hereford Tupsley	1
Hereford Victoria Park	1
Hereford Whitecross	1
Hereford Widemarsh	1

87 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Ledbury parish.

Final recommendations

Ledbury Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Ledbury North	6
Ledbury South	6
Ledbury West	6

88 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Ross-on-Wye parish.

Final recommendations

Ross-on-Wye Town Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Ross-on-Wye East	6
Ross-on-Wye North	6
Ross-on-Wye West	6

What happens next?

89 We have now completed our review of Herefordshire. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2027.

Equalities

90 The Commission is satisfied that it complies with its legal obligations under the Equality Act and that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.

Appendices

Appendix A

Final recommendations for Herefordshire

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2031)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Arrow	1	2,975	2,975	7%	3,187	3,187	6%
2	Aylestone Hill	1	2,583	2,583	-7%	2,759	2,759	-9%
3	Backbury	1	2,594	2,594	-7%	3,000	3,000	-1%
4	Belmont Rural	1	2,712	2,712	-3%	2,919	2,919	-3%
5	Birch	1	2,618	2,618	-6%	2,850	2,850	-6%
6	Bircher	1	3,262	3,262	17%	3,478	3,478	15%
7	Bishops Frome & Cradley	1	2,625	2,625	-6%	2,828	2,828	-6%
8	Bobblestock	1	2,768	2,768	-1%	2,972	2,972	-2%
9	Bromyard Bringsty	1	3,059	3,059	10%	3,247	3,247	8%
10	Bromyard West	1	2,388	2,388	-14%	2,752	2,752	-9%
11	Castle	1	2,495	2,495	-10%	2,793	2,793	-8%
12	Central	1	2,915	2,915	5%	3,103	3,103	3%
13	College	1	2,705	2,705	-3%	2,886	2,886	-4%

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2031)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
14	Credenhill	1	2,598	2,598	-7%	2,742	2,742	-9%
15	Dinedor Hill	1	2,805	2,805	1%	3,203	3,203	6%
16	Eign Hill	1	2,787	2,787	0%	2,942	2,942	-3%
17	Golden Valley North	1	2,515	2,515	-10%	2,783	2,783	-8%
18	Golden Valley South	1	2,664	2,664	-4%	2,841	2,841	-6%
19	Greyfriars	1	2,547	2,547	-9%	2,707	2,707	-10%
20	Hagley	1	3,259	3,259	17%	3,452	3,452	14%
21	Hampton	1	2,888	2,888	4%	3,052	3,052	1%
22	Hinton & Hunderton	1	2,927	2,927	5%	3,130	3,130	4%
23	Holmer	1	2,789	2,789	0%	3,176	3,176	5%
24	Hope End	1	3,032	3,032	9%	3,198	3,198	6%
25	Kerne Bridge	1	2,853	2,853	2%	3,032	3,032	0%
26	Kings Acre	1	2,632	2,632	-5%	2,787	2,787	-8%
27	Kington	1	2,594	2,594	-7%	2,743	2,743	-9%
28	Ledbury North	1	2,419	2,419	-13%	3,249	3,249	8%
29	Ledbury South	1	2,903	2,903	4%	3,101	3,101	3%

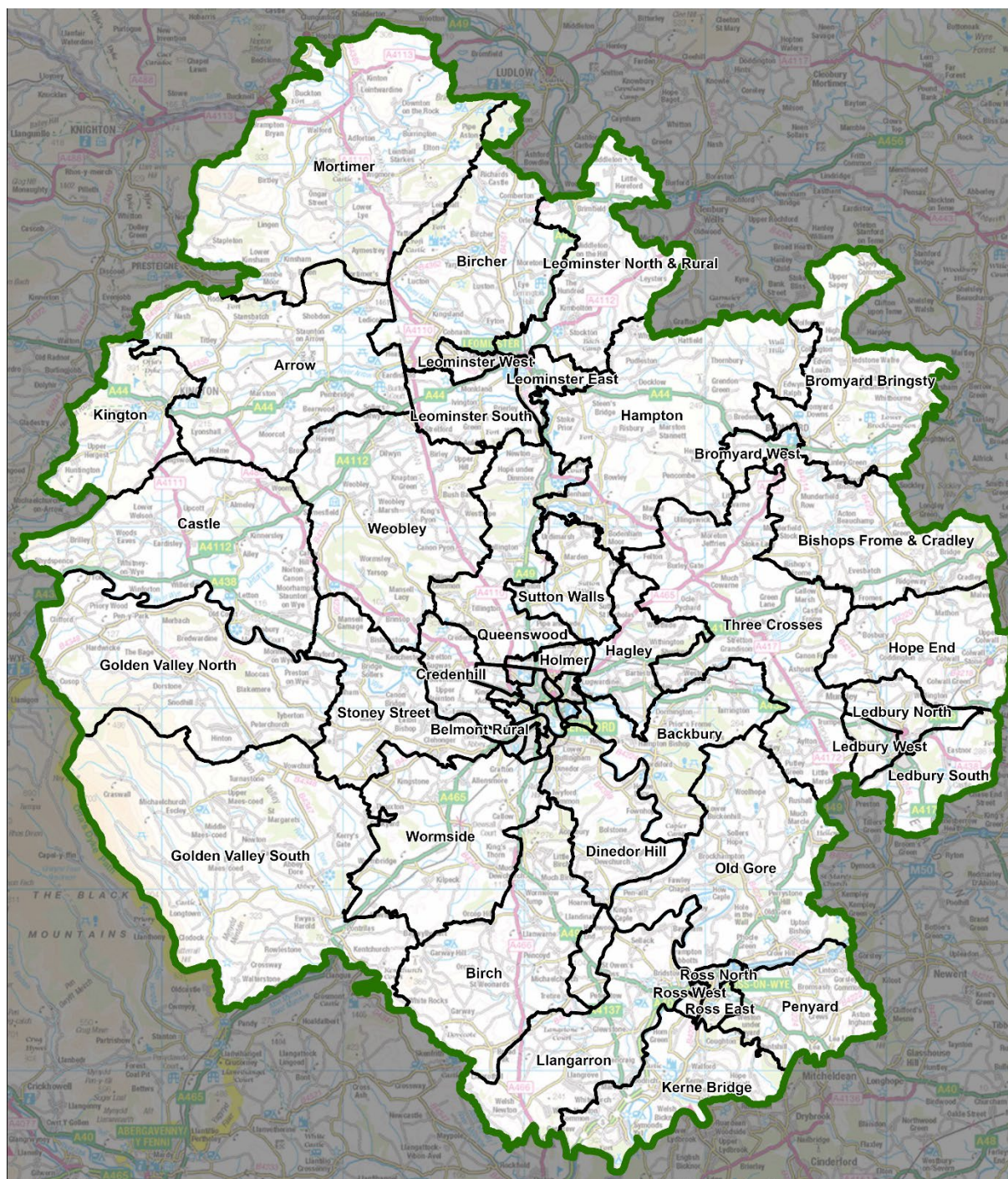
	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2031)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
30	Ledbury West	1	3,198	3,198	15%	3,368	3,368	12%
31	Leominster East	1	2,949	2,949	6%	3,133	3,133	4%
32	Leominster North & Rural	1	3,102	3,102	11%	3,298	3,298	9%
33	Leominster South	1	2,609	2,609	-6%	2,792	2,792	-8%
34	Leominster West	1	2,112	2,112	-24%	2,772	2,772	-8%
35	Llangarron	1	2,927	2,927	5%	3,106	3,106	3%
36	Mortimer	1	2,702	2,702	-3%	2,930	2,930	-3%
37	Newton Farm	1	3,046	3,046	9%	3,264	3,264	8%
38	Old Gore	1	2,506	2,506	-10%	2,670	2,670	-12%
39	Penyard	1	2,845	2,845	2%	3,126	3,126	4%
40	Queenswood	1	2,751	2,751	-1%	2,934	2,934	-3%
41	Red Hill	1	2,896	2,896	4%	3,072	3,072	2%
42	Ross East	1	2,747	2,747	-1%	3,047	3,047	1%
43	Ross North	1	3,083	3,083	11%	3,296	3,296	9%
44	Ross West	1	3,147	3,147	13%	3,327	3,327	10%
45	Saxon Gate	1	2,870	2,870	3%	3,046	3,046	1%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2031)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
46 Stoney Street	1	2,858	2,858	3%	3,133	3,133	4%
47 Sutton Walls	1	2,599	2,599	-7%	2,883	2,883	-5%
48 Three Crosses	1	2,909	2,909	4%	3,153	3,153	4%
49 Tupsley	1	2,592	2,592	-7%	2,743	2,743	-9%
50 Weobley	1	2,898	2,898	4%	3,113	3,113	3%
51 Whitecross	1	2,695	2,695	-3%	2,884	2,884	-5%
52 Widemarsh	1	2,596	2,596	-7%	2,839	2,839	-6%
53 Wormside	1	3,055	3,055	10%	3,240	3,240	7%
Totals	53	147,603	–	–	160,081	–	–
Averages	–	–	2,785	–	–	3,020	–

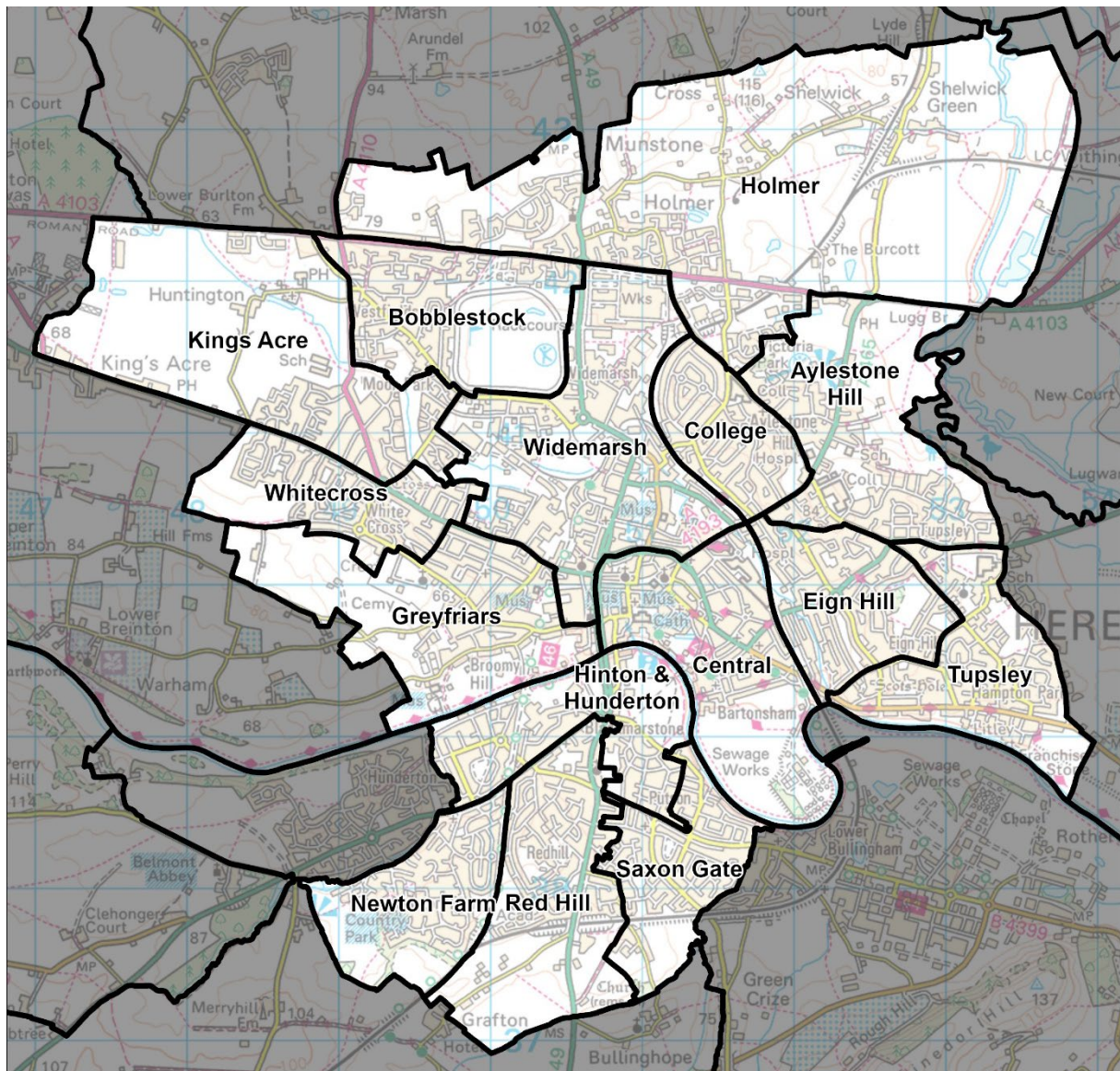
Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Herefordshire Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward varies from the average for the authority. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower-than-average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Outline map



Hereford



A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/herefordshire

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:

www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/herefordshire

Local Authority

- Herefordshire Council

Councillors

- Councillor P. Andrews (Herefordshire Council)
- Councillor M. Atkins (Richards Castle Parish Council)
- Councillor L. Delves (Ross-on-Wye Town Council)
- Councillor E. Foxton (Herefordshire Council)
- Councillor D. Hurcomb (Herefordshire Council)
- Councillor J. Lester (Herefordshire Council)
- Councillor M. O'Sullivan (Yarpole Group Parish Council)
- Councillor I. Powell (Herefordshire Council)
- Councillor D. Toynbee (Herefordshire Council)

Parish and Town Councils

- Ledbury Town Council
- Orleton Parish Council
- Richards Castle Parish Council
- Stoke Lacy Parish Council
- Wigmore Group Parish Council
- Withington Group Parish Council
- Yarpole Group Parish Council

Local Residents

- 11 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

Councillor Numbers	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Changes Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority.
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. We only take account of electors registered specifically for local elections during our reviews.
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents

Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

Translations and other formats:

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Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

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A note on our mapping:

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was set up by Parliament, independent of Government and political parties. It is directly accountable to Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. It is responsible for conducting boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government.

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X: @LGBCE

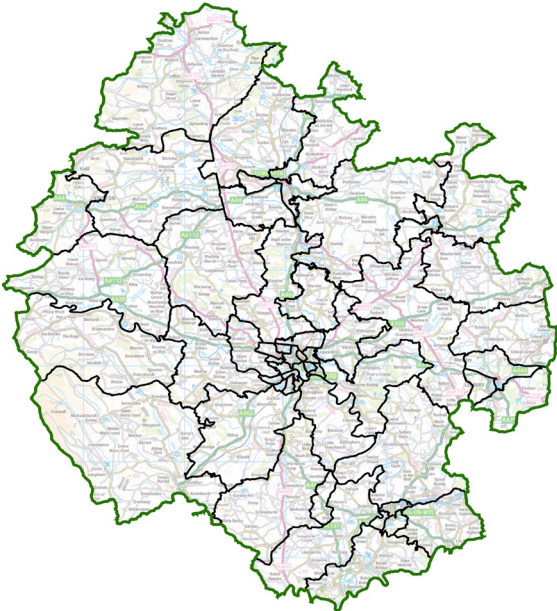
Our Recommendations

The table lists all the wards we are proposing as part of our final recommendations along with the number of electors in each ward. The table also shows the electoral variances for each of the proposed wards which tells you how we have delivered electoral equality. Finally, the table includes electorate projections for **2031** so you can see the impact of the recommendations for the future.

Ward name				Ward name			
		Electorate (2031)	Variance from average %			Electorate (2031)	Variance from average
1	Arrow	3,187	6%	28	Ledbury North	3,249	8%
2	Aylestone Hill	2,759	-9%	29	Ledbury South	3,101	3%
3	Backbury	3,000	-1%	30	Ledbury West	3,368	12%
4	Belmont Rural	2,919	-3%	31	Leominster East	3,133	4%
5	Birch	2,850	-6%	32	Leominster North & Rural	3,298	9%
6	Bircher	3,478	15%	33	Leominster South	2,792	-8%
7	Bishops Frome & Cradley	2,828	-6%	34	Leominster West	2,772	-8%
8	Bobblesstock	2,972	-2%	35	Llangarron	3,106	3%
9	Bromyard Bringsty	3,247	8%	36	Mortimer	2,930	-3%
10	Bromyard West	2,752	-9%	37	Newton Farm	3,264	8%
11	Castle	2,793	-8%	38	Old Gore	2,670	-12%
12	Central	3,103	3%	39	Penyard	3,126	4%
13	College	2,886	-4%	40	Queenswood	2,934	-3%
14	Credenhill	2,742	-9%	41	Red Hill	3,072	2%
15	Dinedor Hill	3,203	6%	42	Ross East	3,047	1%
16	Eign Hill	2,942	-3%	43	Ross North	3,296	9%
17	Golden Valley North	2,783	-8%	44	Ross West	3,327	10%
18	Golden Valley South	2,841	-6%	45	Saxon Gate	3,046	1%
19	Greyfriars	2,707	-10%	46	Stoney Street	3,133	4%
20	Hagley	3,452	14%	47	Sutton Walls	2,883	-5%
21	Hampton	3,052	1%	48	Three Crosses	3,153	4%
22	Hinton & Hunderton	3,130	4%	49	Tupsley	2,743	-9%
23	Holmer	3,176	5%	50	Weobley	3,113	3%
24	Hope End	3,198	6%	51	Whitecross	2,884	-5%
25	Kerne Bridge	3,032	0%	52	Widemarsh	2,839	-6%
26	Kings Acre	2,787	-8%	53	Wormside	3,240	7%
27	Kington	2,743	-9%				
				Total	160,081	Average	3,020

Herefordshire Council

Final Recommendations on the new electoral arrangements



Who we are

- The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament.
- We are not part of government or any political party.
- We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons.
- Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

Electoral review

An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority, including:

- The total number of councillors representing the council's electors ('council size').
- The names, number and boundaries of wards or electoral divisions.
- The number of councillors for each ward or division.

Why Herefordshire?

- The Commission has a legal duty to carry out an electoral review of each council in England 'from time to time'.
- Herefordshire Council has not been reviewed since 2013 and the Commission has therefore decided that it should review Herefordshire in advance of the elections in 2027.

Our proposals

- Herefordshire Council currently has 53 councillors. Based on the evidence we received, we recommend that 53 councillors should serve the council in the future.
- We believe our final recommendations meet our statutory criteria to:
 1. Deliver electoral equality for electors
 2. Reflect community interests and identities
 3. Promote effective and convenient local government

Summary of our recommendations

We have considered all the submissions received during the consultation on our draft recommendations.

The final recommendations propose that Herefordshire should have 53 councillors, the same as there are now.

Herefordshire should have 53 wards, the same as the current arrangement. The boundaries of 17 of the existing wards should change.

The 53 councillors should represent 53 single-councillor wards across the county.

An outline of the proposals is shown in the map to the right.

Find out more at

https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/herefordshire

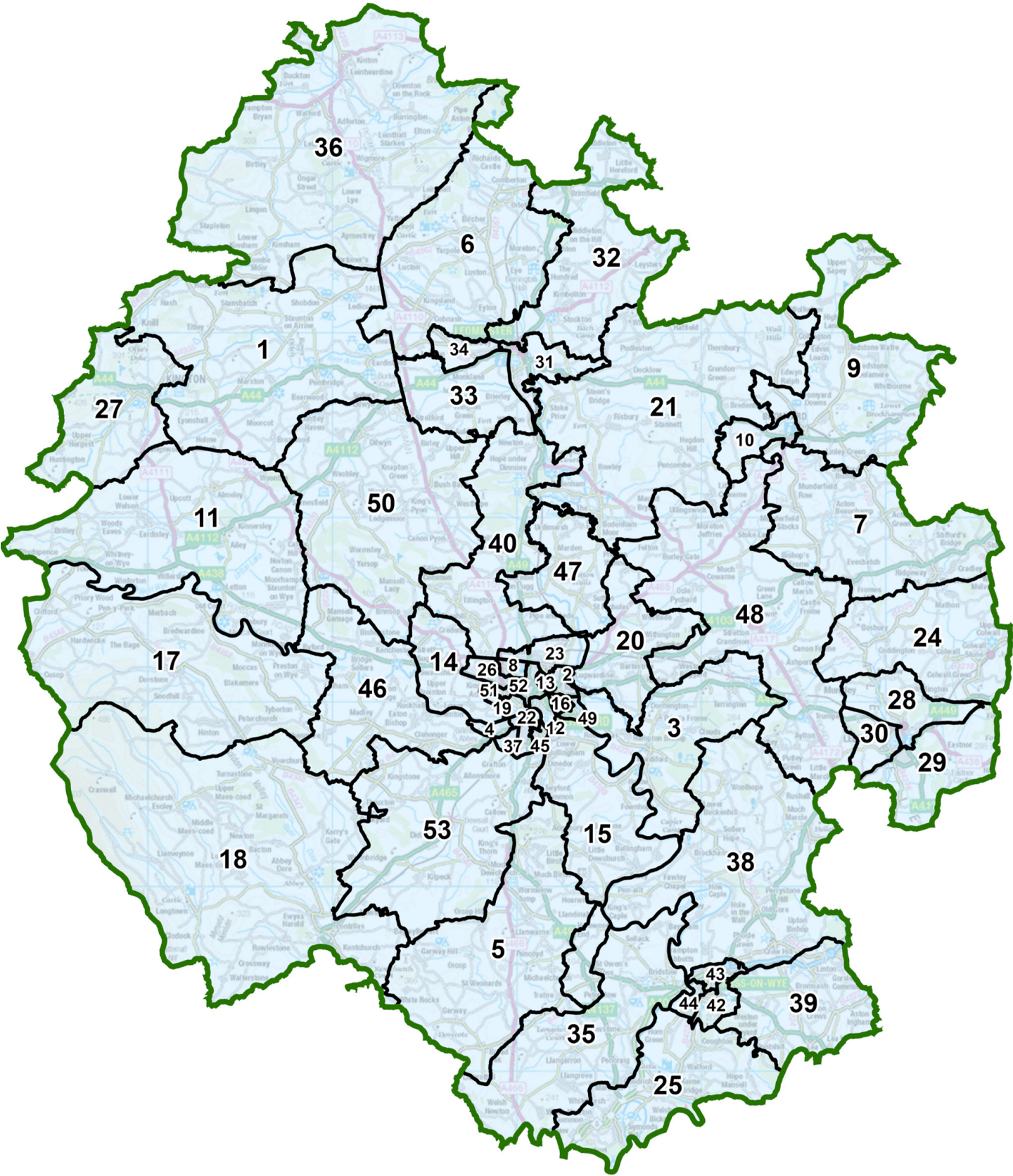
- view the map of our recommendations down to street level.
- zoom into the areas that interest you most.
- read the full report of our recommendations.
- find more guidance on the review process

Stage of Review	Description
25 November 2025 - 2 February 2026	Public consultation on warding arrangements
28 April 2026 - 6 July 2026	Public consultation on draft recommendations
29 September 2026	Publication of final recommendations
May 2027	Subject to parliamentary approval - implementation of new arrangements at local elections

Overview of final recommendations for Herefordshire Council

View this map online and explore it in more detail at: https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/herefordshire

- 1 Arrow
- 2 Aylestone Hill
- 3 Backbury
- 4 Belmont Rural
- 5 Birch
- 6 Bircher
- 7 Bishops Frome & Cradley
- 8 Bobblestock
- 9 Bromyard Bringsty
- 10 Bromyard West
- 11 Castle
- 12 Central
- 13 College
- 14 Credenhill
- 15 Dinedor Hill
- 16 Eign Hill
- 17 Golden Valley North
- 18 Golden Valley South
- 19 Greyfriars
- 20 Hagley
- 21 Hampton
- 22 Hinton & Hunderton
- 23 Holmer
- 24 Hope End
- 25 Kerne Bridge
- 26 Kings Acre
- 27 Kington
- 28 Ledbury North
- 29 Ledbury South
- 30 Ledbury West
- 31 Leominster East
- 32 Leominster North & Rural
- 33 Leominster South
- 34 Leominster West
- 35 Llangarron
- 36 Mortimer
- 37 Newton Farm
- 38 Old Gore
- 39 Penyard
- 40 Queenswood
- 41 Red Hill
- 42 Ross East
- 43 Ross North
- 44 Ross West
- 45 Saxon Gate
- 46 Stoney Street
- 47 Sutton Walls
- 48 Three Crosses
- 49 Tupsley
- 50 Weobley
- 51 Whitecross
- 52 Widemarsh
- 53 Wormside



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Report prepared by Olivia Trueman – Community Engagement Officer

**QUOTATIONS FOR UPDATING THE MAPS WITHIN THE TOWN'S NOTICE
BOARDS – FURTHER INFORMATION FROM FULL COUNCIL 6 AUGUST 2026**

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the additional information requested at the Full Council meeting held on 6 August 2026 regarding the proposed replacement town maps.

Detailed Information

In early 2025, the Council agreed that members of the Tourism, Events, Markets and Planning (TEMAP) Working Group would apply to the BID Market Towns Fund for grant funding to produce a new town map for Ledbury. Funding was also sought to replace the four poster maps currently located around the town at High Street, Bye Street Car Park, St Katherine's Car Park and Tesco. The TEMAP Working Group was subsequently awarded £1,046 towards the project.

Following the dissolution of the TEMAP Working Group, the Community Engagement Officer progressed the project with support from a former member of the group. A quotation has been received from Orphans Press, who designed the new town map leaflets, for the production and printing of four replacement poster maps.

The design specification provided to Members previously sets out the proposed design brief, including a central town map, heritage buildings around the edge, a style consistent with the new Ledbury visitor leaflets, location specific 'You Are Here' markers, and space for visitor information.

Final artwork has not been produced as Council approval to proceed has not yet been given. The BID has agreed that Orphans Press should undertake the design and production, building on the work they have already completed for the new Ledbury town map and visitor leaflet. Subject to approval, Officers will work with Orphans Press to develop the final designs, which will then be brought to Committee for discussion. It is recommended that the TEMAP Working Group be reinstated to support this process.

Previous Council Resolution

At the previous meeting, Members resolved that the item be deferred pending the following information:

1. Pictures of the current maps and the proposed maps.
The photographs of the existing map display boards and their current maps are provided within Appendix A to the original report. The appendix also contains the design specification and examples illustrating the proposed style and content. A final proposed map design is not currently available because the quotation has not yet been approved and the design work has not been commissioned. The design specification is therefore provided as the basis on which Members are being asked to approve the project.

2. Consideration of other potential locations where further maps could be displayed.

In addition to replacing the four existing maps at Bye Street Car Park, St Katherine's Car Park, High Street and Tesco Car Park, an additional location has been identified at Ledbury Railway Station. A new visitor information board has been installed at the station in partnership with London Northwestern and West Midlands Railways. It is proposed that a town map is included within this board to assist visitors arriving by rail.

3. Confirmation that Ledbury Town Council retain ownership of the map file in a vector format for future use.

It is recommended that Ledbury Town Council retain the final electronic/vector version of the map artwork. This would allow the Council to retain the map for future use, including future reprinting, updating or adaptation. Orphans have agreed to this.

4. Consideration of making use of the back of the notice boards, where appropriate, for paid advertising.

Officers recommend that this be part of discussion in a reinstated TEMAP working party, as this could be a project working with local businesses and potentially an art project with schools and community. Funding could potentially be sourced from the BID or from businesses.

5. The exact sizes of maps required for each location, with measurements provided in metric.

The measurements supplied within Appendix A show the dimensions of the existing map spaces and notice boards. The quotation received from Orphans Press is for four poster maps at 594mm × 841mm. The Railway Station map is proposed separately at A0 size. These sizes are therefore the basis of the quotations presented to Members, subject to final confirmation against the relevant display areas before production.

Design and Production

The design specification already supplied to Members sets out the intended approach for the four replacement maps. The maps would use the same visual style as the new Ledbury visitor leaflets, include a large central map, heritage buildings around the edge and an individual 'You Are Here' marker for each location. The specification also identifies visitor information, a QR code and acknowledgement of Eastnor Castle sponsorship.

The Council is therefore being asked to approve the quotation and the proposed specification, rather than a completed final design. Once approval is granted, the appointed designer can produce the final artwork for review and production.

Financial Implications

The Market Towns Fund grant of £1,046 will contribute towards the cost of producing the four replacement maps. The quotation received from Orphans Press is £957.24 excluding VAT for four waterproof poster prints, or £1,013.68 excluding VAT for four prints with gloss laminate mounted onto 3mm Foamex.

The additional Railway Station map is estimated at £91.45 and is proposed to be funded from Promotional Materials budget line 107/4703, which currently has an uncommitted budget of £2,679.

Subject to Council approval, restoration of the existing notice boards would be met from budget code 107/4704 – Tourism/Town Projects, which currently has an uncommitted budget of £5,108.

The quotation received is detailed below:

Description	Total cost (Excluding VAT)
Digital print onto waterproof poster x4	£957.24
Digital print and gloss laminate, mounted onto 3mm Foamex x4 (estimated to last longer)	£1,013.68

Recommendation

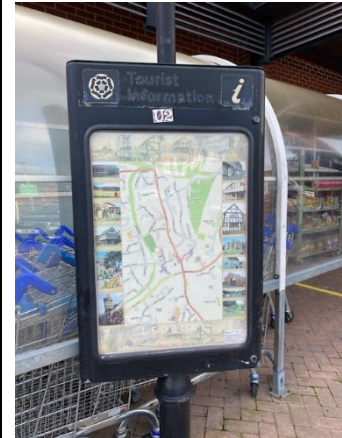
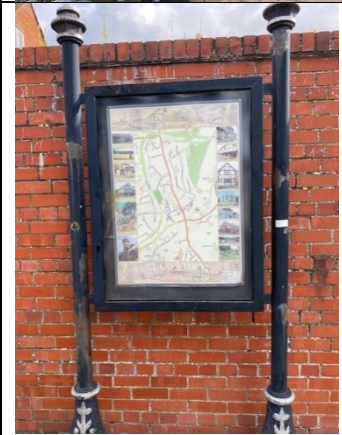
Members are requested to:

1. Approve the quotation from Orphans Press for the production and printing of four replacement town maps, to be funded through the £1,046 grant awarded from the Market Towns Fund. Designs will be submitted to Full Council accordingly and when available.

2. Approve the production and installation of an additional town map at Ledbury Railway Station at a cost of £91.45, with funding to be met from the Promotional Materials budget line 107/4703.
3. Note the advice received from Herefordshire Council regarding ownership of the existing map boards and agree that Ledbury Town Council assumes responsibility for their future maintenance and management.
4. Instruct officers to assess refurbishment requirements of existing map boards, to include the replacement of Perspex panels and obtain quotes.
5. To reinstate the TEMAP working party to ensure that this project is continued, noting that the Community Engagement Officer will no longer be in post from 10 September 2026.

BOARDS

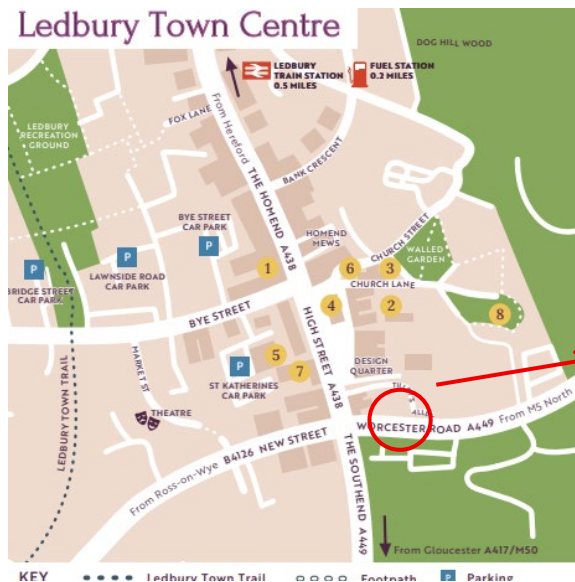
Purpose: Replace the tourism maps in the 4 display boards in the following locations:

Images of maps and display boards	Location
	Tesco Carpark
	Bye Street Carpark
	St Katherine's Carpark



High Street

Design brief – Similar to the current maps, with heritage buildings illustrated around the edge of the map, using the same visual style as the new Ledbury leaflets.



Central large map on all posters.

Each map must be individually amended so that the **“You Are Here”** marker reflects the correct station location for that specific board.

Add something about Eastnor Castle as they have sponsored the maps.

Header/title – “Welcome to Ledbury” could be included at the top of the map to help give the design a more personal and welcoming feel, rather than it appearing as just a standard map

Footer section – Include space at the bottom of the map for a short section on what visitors can



see and do in Ledbury, including a QR code linking to the Ledbury Independent Shopping website on Visit Hereford.

Section at the bottom to advise visitors that they can download a copy of the ‘welcome to Ledbury Maps’ or they can collect copies from the TIC or shops in Ledbury.

Cost/ Funding

Ledbury Town Council has been awarded **£1,046 through the Market Towns Grant Fund** to support the creation and final design of four town map signs.

The funding will be used for the **design and production of four town map installations** to improve wayfinding and visitor navigation within the town.

Funding Requirements

- The **Visit Herefordshire logo** must be included on all map signage.
- A copy of the final map artwork and photographs of the installed signs must be provided for monitoring purposes.

Additional Quote – A0 Map at the Train Station

As an additional item, we would like the same town map to be produced and printed at A0 size for display at the train station, to help guide visitors arriving by rail into the town centre.

The map should clearly indicate that there is a bus stop less than 50 yards from the station entrance offering access into town. Alternatively, visitors can walk into the town centre in approximately 10–15 minutes.

Please provide this as a separate additional quotation item.

Existing map enlarged.



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Report prepared by Angela Price – Town Clerk

WILDPLAY FUNDING APPLICATION – REQUEST FOR COUNCIL SUPPORT

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust's intention to seek significant external funding to expand its WildPlay programme and to consider whether Ledbury Town Council wishes to endorse the proposed expression of interest.

Detailed Information

WildPlay is part of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and has delivered community outreach activities for approximately 25 years. Its purpose is to engage children in free, nature-based play within the green spaces where they live.

Activities are facilitated by a team of experienced nature play rangers and are intended to:

- help children develop a connection with nature
- support children's physical, social and emotional development
- improve health and wellbeing through outdoor activity
- encourage children who engage with nature from an early age to value and care for the natural environment in later life

Funding Proposal

Herefordshire Wildlife Trust intends to apply for substantial funding to expand WildPlay and replace ageing equipment, including purchasing a vehicle to enable the team to travel between communities.

WildPlay is currently funded through smaller grants and individual contracts. Although this has enabled activities to be delivered, the short-term and limited nature of this funding restricts the scale and reach of the programme.

The proposed project would provide free play events and sessions in market towns and villages for children aged between four and twelve. Particular emphasis would be placed on reaching communities whose access to activities is limited by:

- financial circumstances;
- transport difficulties;
- geographical location; or
- a combination of these factors.

The programme aims to reach at least 3,000 children over a three-year period. An expression of interest is expected to be submitted to the funder by the end of October, followed by a full funding application by the end of November.

Request to Ledbury Town Council

Herefordshire Wildlife Trust has identified Ledbury Town Council as a key local stakeholder and request the Council to consider:

1. Endorsing the proposed expression of interest.
2. Providing a letter or email of support explaining the value of connecting children with nature through active play.
3. Suggesting appropriate green spaces in and around Ledbury, particularly within communities where children and families may have limited access to affordable activities.
4. Advise whether the Council may be interested in discussing a more active role as a delivery partner.

At this stage, the request is principally for an endorsement of the funding proposal.

Detailed delivery arrangements have not yet been developed, and any potential partnership role would therefore require further discussion and, where appropriate, a separate report to Council.

Potential Benefits for Ledbury

The proposed programme could provide a number of benefits to children and families in Ledbury, including:

- free and accessible activities for children aged four to twelve
- increased opportunities for outdoor play and physical activity
- improved engagement with local green spaces
- support for children's health and emotional wellbeing
- activities for families who may otherwise be unable to access them because of cost or transport
- increased awareness of nature, biodiversity and environmental responsibility

The proposal may also complement the Council's wider objectives relating to community wellbeing, youth provision, recreation, environmental sustainability and reducing inequalities.

Potential Locations

Members are invited to identify green spaces that may be suitable for WildPlay activities, particularly those serving areas where access to organised activities may be limited.

WildPlay recognises that any suggested location would remain subject to confirmation of land ownership and the landowner's consent. Before activities took place, appropriate arrangements would also need to be agreed in relation to matters

such as safeguarding, insurance, risk assessments, site suitability, public access and reinstatement of the land following an event.

The Council's endorsement of the expression of interest would not, in itself, constitute permission to use any Council-owned or managed land.

Delivery Partnership

Herefordshire Wildlife Trust has also invited the Council to consider whether it may wish to become a more active delivery partner.

As no detailed partnership proposal is currently available, it is recommended that any expression of interest from the Council should be given without committing the Council to expenditure, staff resources, use of land or other operational support.

Should the funding application progress, officers could meet with WildPlay representatives to explore possible delivery arrangements. Any proposal involving a financial contribution, material staff commitment, formal partnership obligations or use of Council-managed land should be brought back to Council for approval.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no immediate financial implications arising from providing an endorsement or letter of support.

Any future request for financial assistance, use of Council facilities, staff support or a formal delivery partnership would need to be considered separately. No financial or operational commitment should therefore be implied by the Council's support at this preliminary stage.

Recommendation

1. That Ledbury Town Council supports, in principle, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust's expression of interest for funding to expand its WildPlay programme, recognising the potential benefits of free nature-based play for children and families.
2. That the Town Clerk be authorised to provide a letter of support on behalf of the Council.
3. That Members identify any green spaces in and around Ledbury which may be suitable for consideration, subject to landowner consent and all necessary operational, safeguarding, insurance and risk-management requirements.
4. That the Town Clerk be authorised to hold initial discussions with Herefordshire Wildlife Trust about potential delivery arrangements, with any proposal involving a financial, contractual or significant resource commitment being presented to Council for approval.

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2026**

PRESENT: Councillors Eakin, Hamblin, Harvey (Chair) and Wilkinson

R397. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chowns and Morris. Councillor Wilkinson, as the Vice-Chair of the Planning, Economy & Tourism Committee was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Morris.

R398. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

**R399. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES
OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2026**

RESOLVED:

**That the minutes of the Resources Committee held on 3
September 2026 be approved and signed as a correct record.**

R400. POLICIES

Members were asked to consider amendments to the following policies:

Dignity at Work/Civility & Respect
Councillor and Staff Protocol

RECOMMENDATION:

**That Full Council be asked to approve the following amended
policies:**

**Dignity at Work/Civility & Respect
Councillor and Staff Protocol**

R401. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

**That the meeting scheduled for 15 October 2026 be cancelled, in
view of the Clerk's annual leave, and that the next meeting be held
on 5 November 2026.**

R402. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

R403. **STAFFING MATTERS**

1. Recruitment update

Members were provided with an update on the recruitment process in respect of the following roles:

- Amenities Area Operative
- Community Development Officer
- Finance & Governance Manager

Members were also advised on difficulties being experienced due to staff shortages, noting that the Clerk would be on leave from 1 – 21 October. Members agreed to delegate the Clerk to consider the operational needs of the Council and whether it would be appropriate to engage a temporary member of staff to help with the Community Development Officer role until such time a permanent replacement has been engaged.

RESOLVED:

1. That the update in respect of the recruitment to the following roles within Ledbury Town Council be received and noted:

- Amenities Area Operative
- Community Development Officer
- Finance & Governance Manager

2. That the Clerk be delegated authority to review the staffing resources whilst the recruitment process is ongoing and determine whether it would be beneficial to engage a temporary member of staff into the Community Development role, whilst the recruitment process is taking place. If considered necessary, The Clerk to proceed with the temporary resourcing which would be covered within existing budget for the salary provision of the CDO role.

2. Officer TOIL

RESOLVED:

- 1. That members receive and note the senior officer TOIL information, noting that the levels of TOIL are now at a more manageable level.**
- 2. That Officers make every effort to ensure that TOIL levels do not increase above the current levels and that TOIL is approved in all cases in advance of being taken.**

Project update submitted on 1 October 2026

How is your project going?

Our project is going as expected

Is there anything that has gone well that you would like to share with us?

Yes, there is something we would like to share

More about what has gone well

Following our call out for designers, we received 18 expressions of interest. We brought together a group comprising members of the local community who had previously been involved in gathering and shaping community feedback about what the memorial should represent. With support from our external consultants, the group reviewed the submitted designs against the agreed selection criteria. Three designers were shortlisted, with the final decision subsequently agreed by the Board and Full Council. This process once again demonstrated the importance of working collaboratively with the community and ensuring that local voices remain central to the development of the project. There were some delays in securing the necessary approvals, which resulted in the decision-making process taking a few weeks longer than anticipated. This has provided valuable learning for the project. In particular, we have identified the need to ensure that Town Council procedures and approval requirements are clearly understood from the outset, and that Councillors involved in decisions are clear about their role and the importance of timely decision-making where project timescales are involved. Despite this delay, the designer selection process has now been completed, and the experience has strengthened our understanding of the governance and decision-making arrangements needed to support the next stages of the project.

Is there anything that has not gone well that you would like to tell us about?

No, there is nothing that we would like to tell you

Do you have anything else you would like to share with us?

No, we do not have anything else to share with you

Herefordshire Youth Strategy 2026-27

Youth Matters: A National Youth Strategy was published December 2025 – the first national youth strategy for England in over two decades. It sets out 10 action areas over 10 years. The strategy was informed by over 14,000 young people and structured around three chapters: *People Who Care*, *Places to Go* and *Things to Do*, and *Seen and Heard*.



The Three National “Shifts” and Herefordshire

Shift 1: From National to Local

The government is explicitly devolving decision-making and funding to local authorities and communities. Herefordshire’s rurality – with 46% of young people living in rural areas – makes a compelling case for tailored local delivery.

Locally we plan a hub and spoke model of delivery with a core forum created to represent key strategic members of experts and champions who can link into local delivery through our towns, communities and voluntary sector of providers

Shift 2: From Fragmented to Collaborative

The strategy calls for joined-up working across statutory and voluntary sectors.

Locally our strategy embeds collaborative working and tackles the wicked issue of funding as we seek to maximise on commissioning services and deliver high quality youth services across Herefordshire – removing a post code lottery and filling gaps in specialised youth work

Shift 3: From Excluded to Empowered

The strategy commits to co-production with young people and giving them decision-making power.

Locally we will engage with a wide range of existing youth groups across the towns and council to ask and listen to the views, experiences and perspectives of our “Herefordshire Youth” as we develop and deliver against our strategy. Central forum members will link to a range of groups to ensure we hold ourselves to account on hearing our Youth Voice

We will work to the national delivery programme and as champions for our Young People taking every opportunity to bid for additional funding that is being provided within the commitment to deliver the national strategy

Herefordshire Vision and Strategy

Herefordshire Council recognises its duties under Section 507B of the Education Act 1996, which requires authorities, set the vision, establish local needs, so far as reasonably practicable secure to secure sufficient provision for young people to access educational and recreational leisure-time activities that improve their wellbeing, together with sufficient facilities to support those activities.

Our Youth Strategy sits within the wider Children and Young People Strategic Vision for children and young people in Herefordshire.

Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership Vision

- Our vision is for Children and Young People in Herefordshire to:
- Feel included, valued, happy, healthy and safe in their homes and in their community as they grow up.
- Have access to good quality education, housing, sport leisure and play facilities that enable them to thrive in their physical, emotional, intellectual and social development as they grow up to be young adults and
- Live in a county of towns and villages that value them as Children and Young People and be the next generation to help keep Herefordshire the place where people want to live and work.

Our Youth Strategy combines this vision with that of the national strategy and aims to ensure every young person in Herefordshire - regardless of background, location, need or identity - has access to people who care, places to go, things to do, and meaningful opportunities to be seen, heard and influential in their communities.

This is a shared strategy

We will work together across the “partnership” engaging all those involved in Youth Work – valuing their skills and experience, their commitment and drive as we champion youth in Herefordshire.

Our local Strategic Priorities

Priority 1: Partnerships, Governance and Investment

Priority 2: Welcoming, Safe and Accessible Youth Spaces.

Priority 3: Richer Lives: Creativity and Opportunity in our Youth Offer

Priority 4: Workforce & Practice Best Development

Core Principles of Herefordshire's Strategy

❖ Inclusion & Equal Access

- Recognise diverse interests, skills and hobbies across the county.
- Commit to equitable access for vulnerable groups, including rural residents, young carers, those with English as a second language, those care experienced, LGBTQ young people and those at risk of exploitation.
- Maximise inclusion for children with additional needs through supported engagement in universal youth provision and through provision of specialist youth services.
- Align with national focus on reducing isolation, increasing safe spaces and closing the participation gap.

❖ Youth Voice at our Centre

- Ensure young people actively shape decisions at parish, town, county and partnership levels.
- Engagement through our wide variety of young people key forums, not exclusive, are listed in appendix a with nominated core forum representatives.
- **Regularly capture young people's views** on what makes them feel safe, valued and connected.
- Use insights from the local **Rural Media and national *State of the Nation* research** to benchmark local needs.
- Engaging our Youth in **local democracy**

❖ Strengthening our Workforce

- **Value the spectrum** from community volunteers to qualified youth workers.
- Develop a coordinated **career pathway**, consistent with national investment in youth worker capacity.

❖ Community-Based Approach

- **Prioritise local community spaces and accessible hubs** across all towns and parishes.
- Align with national commitments to build **Young Futures Hubs** and strengthen local youth ecosystems.

2. Implementation of our strategy

Priority 1: Partnerships, Governance & Investment

Goal: Build an integrated, sustainable youth system.

Actions:

- Formalise governance through the **Children and Young People Strategic Partnership**, with the Central Youth Forum as an advisory and accountability structure.
- Coordinate development with the national **Youth Hub/Family Hub models**.
- Maximise **grant opportunities and explore pooled budgets** for shared youth worker capacity, equipment and mobile activity units.
- Maintain an accessible, **public directory of youth provision** for all families.
- Undertake a Youth Partnership Needs Assessment to inform future planning and strategy development in 2027
- Support **delivery of the strategy through local spokes** connected to the Central Youth Forum.
- **Co-produce with young people a localised annual plan ensuring** Herefordshire youth are involved in the review and iteration of future priority actions. Marking the difference between 'we asked young people what they thought of our plan' and 'young people helped shape what the plan
- **Annual State of Herefordshire Youth Report** aligned to national *State of the Nation* methodology.
- Develop a **Quality Assurance framework** (Data/YP feedback and audit) to tell us how well our Youth services are received and the difference they are making

Priority 2: Welcoming, Safe and Accessible Youth Spaces

Goal: Guarantee a network of youth-friendly spaces across Herefordshire to ensure every young person has access to trusted adults outside the home.

Actions:

- **Develop safe spaces and trusted environments**, responding to concerns about online harm, crime and exploitation—mirroring national priorities on safety and digital resilience
- **Identify transport solutions** (including community transport, minibus pooling, subsidy models) using local and national developments/funding commitments to support accessibility
- **Develop a mobile Youth Hub** to increase accessibility across the rural county
- **Support and develop Digital youth provision** to enhance accessibility

Priority 3: Richer Lives : Creativity and Opportunity in our Youth Offer

Goal: Develop a range of high quality and accessible youth services

Actions:

- **Strengthen links with local businesses, skills providers, employers** and training programmes to create opportunities for experience and funding for services.
- Prioritise enrichment opportunities, using the national **Richer Young Lives** guidance and commitments to expand enrichment in schools and communities.
- **Coordinate with Herefordshire's Culture Strategy** to engage and create opportunities for our Youth.
- **Develop mobile and pop-up Youth Offer** to reach rural communities and maximize engagement
- **Identify national delivery of the Youth Offer** i.e National Sports England and Arts Council and ensure Herefordshire has a local offer / funding where possible
- Develop opportunities for **engaging our young people in local democracy**

Priority 4: Workforce & Practice Development

Goal: Develop a skilled supported workforce of Youth Workers and ensure every young person can access trusted adults and supportive mentors who can support them to realize and achieve their full potential as young people soon to be young adults.

Actions:

- Expand **trained youth workers**, mentors, coaches and peer supporters
- **Embed trauma-informed practice** across youth workers and volunteers.
- Explore **shared staffing models** to support small or rural providers
- Deliver an accessible shared training programme for the Youth Sector
- Regular **practitioner forum** via HVOSS for training, best practice, safeguarding, innovation and peer learning.
- Alignment with **national workforce development funding streams**.



Implementation Timeline Milestones (2026–2029)

Year 1 (2026–27): Foundations

- **Herefordshire Youth Strategy launch Autum 26**
- Establish governance, working groups and youth co-production structure.
- Map current provision and produce locality youth plans.
- Launch Herefordshire Youth Directory.
- Begin workforce development programmes.

Year 2 (2027–28): Expansion

- Roll out strengthened youth spaces and targeted rural initiatives.
- Introduce shared staffing models and new enrichment programmes.
- Review our strategy against the State of the Nation Youth Report 27/28
- Implement transport pilots.

Year 3 (2028–29): Consolidation & Evaluation

- Review delivery against national Youth Matters commitments.
- Publish first full *State of Herefordshire Youth* report.
- Secure sustainable investment and partnership agreements.

6. Conclusion

This strategy positions Herefordshire as a county where **every young person is heard, supported and able to thrive**, fully aligned with our Children and Young People vision and the national Youth Strategy vision for 2035. By combining strong local insight from young people with the evidence and commitments of the local Leads and National Youth Strategy, we can create a sustainable, inclusive and future-facing approach as part of **Child Friendly Herefordshire**.

Appendix A - Strategy Implementation Action Plan

National Key Dates and Funding Windows

Timeframe	National Milestone	HYPN Action
2026	Local Youth Transformation Pilots launch; workforce fund opens	Submit expressions of interest; map workforce gaps
2026–2027	Young Futures Hub site selection (50 by March 2029)	Prepare and submit Hub bid with partnership evidence
2027	National interim delivery report published	Publish local baseline report
2027–2028	Local Covenant Partnerships programme delivery	Formalise HYPN as partnership vehicle; apply
2028–2029	Hubs operational; Mental Health Support Teams in all schools	Ensure school coverage; integrate with Hub
2029–2035	Progress toward headline targets; ongoing funding cycles	Track local indicators; annual bids; participation reports