

July/August 2026 Ward Report Ledbury South (Eastnor and Donnington) Cllr Stef Simmons

Herefordshire Council News

Children's Services

Following Ofsted's recent Good rating, this month the government has revoked the statutory direction on children's services. This is a significant milestone and reflects many years of hard work, determination and improvement. It marks an important moment for the council and demonstrates what can be achieved through collective effort and a relentless focus on improving outcomes for children and young people in Herefordshire.

Rail Strategy

Following adoption of the new Local Transport Plan a Herefordshire Rail Strategy is currently being developed and your three ward members have been actively lobbying for Ledbury Station and its rail services to be a priority for investment and development of access and improved interconnections with road, bus and cycling.

Hereford Bypass (Phase 1)

The Full Business Case has been published for the Southern Link Road (renamed as Phase 1 Bypass) and whilst this 2 mile road shows a 1.6 Value for Money score, it now recognises for the first time that this will only result in congestion improvements on Walnut Tree Avenue and Holme Lacey Road with a 6minute journey time improvement to Rotherwas industrial estate. It does nothing to address congestion on Greyfriars Bridge or in the centre of Hereford. I have continued to scrutinise the £45.3 million design and build costs and have concerns about the environmental costs and 'Value Engineering' that is required to stay within this budget. All Herefordshire council tax-payers will see £2million a year for the next 40 years of their rates disappearing to repay the loan. There is no prospect of Government funding the estimated £350million cost for a full Western bypass with new river crossing.

Ward News

Expansion of JMHS

The school has been allocated £4.6million to construct a new building and make changes elsewhere on site to enable a move from 5 form entry (750 pupils across all years) to 6 form entry (eventually 900 pupils across all years). This will help address the expansion in pupil numbers from the new homes being built around Ledbury.

Lidl v Tesco

Tesco have brought a second Judicial Review on planning technicalities against Herefordshire Council Planning Committees decision to re-approve the Lidl/Medical Centre/Nursery planning application. The council following advice from Kings Counsel will be vigorously contesting Tesco's grounds for the JR. The High Court has 6 weeks to determine whether Tesco has grounds and allow the JR to proceed or not. This delay is deeply frustrating and goes against the democratic will of Herefordshire Planning Committee that has now twice approved the plans.

Pump Track

The planning application for the Pump Track at Deer Park has now been submitted and validated (application number 262052). This provides an 8 week opportunity for consultation comments and I very much hope Ledbury residents can support this facility for our young people and make this wish known.

I hold a monthly Ward Surgery at Ledbury Rugby Club on Tuesdays 6:30 – 7:30pm by appointment, or I can visit individuals if mobility an issue. I am contactable via email stef.simmons@herefordshire.gov.uk or phone 07792881706. Please send any written correspondence to: Cllr Stef Simmons, C/O Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane, Hereford HR4 0LE