

Ward Member report – longer than average but hopefully full of useful stuff.

May 2020

Elissa Swinglehurst, serving the parishes of Llangarron, Bridstow, Peterstow, Marstow, Sellack and Welsh Newton and Llanrothal.

Covid 19.

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

I attended (virtually) the cabinet meeting this week where the CEO gave a report on the response of the local authority to the pandemic. The report is also in written form in the agenda for that meeting, it is comprehensive and gives a clear picture of the way in which the council has had to re shape itself, rise to the challenge and work to keep vulnerable people as safe as possible. Subjects covered include the provision of PPE, changes to working practices, adult care, children's care, supporting business, waste and transport. It's worth a look if you are interested, there is a summary later in this report but I would still recommend this link to the agenda

<http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/g7850/Public%20reports%20pack%20Thursday%2030-Apr-2020%2014.30%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

The meeting was conducted via Zoom and the public were/are able to access it via You Tube

<https://www.youtube.com/user/HerefordshireCouncil> .

Community response.

A big thank you to everyone for looking out for your neighbours, our community lead contacts, and the huge amount of random acts of kindness that are being done in our communities. Below is the e mail for our main contact who links into the Herefordshire system and hopefully can help with sorting out difficulties and problems. If you can offer some support, are in need or know someone who is in need please make contact. I think we all recognise that the past five weeks are a phase in this crisis and we will need to sustain our local support systems for some time yet. We must not be complacent, this is far from over.

Llangarron Ward CV19 response co-ordinator is Kelly Dennis Kelly.Dennis@herefordshire.gov.uk

Or Talkcommunitycovidresponse@herefordshire.gov.uk Telephone: 01432 260027

PLEASE BE SCAM AWARE BY EMAIL, FACEBOOK & ON DOORSTEP

West Mercia Police have issued a warning to members of the public that criminals are using the COVID-19 pandemic to scam people out of money. The police are urging people not to click the online bait and become a victim. Also, the police, HMRC or banks will never ask anyone to transfer money or move it to a safe account, so please ignore these requests.

[There have been reports in Herefordshire of doorsteps salemen claiming to be from the NHS !](#)

You can read the latest news about the coronavirus scams in detail on the [West Mercia Police website](#).

Covid-19 testing

Covid-19 testing is now open to any essential worker who is self-isolating due to possible coronavirus, those who need to leave their home for work and are symptomatic, and anyone aged

over 65 with symptoms. The test is only for people who have **symptoms** of coronavirus – whether that’s an individual, or someone they live with. The mobile drive-through testing service is located at Merton Meadow car park in Hereford until 7 May for those who have pre-booked on the government website. Further details including eligibility and how to arrange a test, can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

Report social gatherings & Businesses trading

Residents are able to report a business which is open to the general public that they believe should not be or to report a social gathering online at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-shop-or-gathering>. Duty officers will investigate further with police colleagues.

Project Shield Call Handlers

Council staff are contacting nearly 5,000 residents shielding from the virus due to being classed as extremely high risk. These are being conducted patiently over the phone to assess their individual needs to ensure they receive the right kind of support, and that they are not alone.

Life Under Lockdown History Project

Herefordshire Council’s archive and records team and libraries have joined forces with the Hereford Times to collect images that best capture the spirit and consequences of ‘Life Under Lockdown’ and will be part of the county’s historical records for years to come. Read more https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/985/residents_invited_to_contribute_photos_to_herefordshire_s_life_under_lockdown_history_project

VE Day

Next Friday should have been a public holiday to reflect the 75th anniversary of the ending of World War two in Europe – VE Day. Sadly nationally and locally all plans are postponed. There is a campaign to celebrate by having a singalong to ‘We’ll Meet again’ at 9 pm on the 8th. We can put out some bunting, do what we can.

Message from Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Herefordshire, The Dowager Countess of Darnley
CVO Lady Darnley,

“Coronavirus has altered our lives so completely that we are all having to accept unexpected, and unwelcome, restrictions and challenges. It is a great disappointment that so many long-planned events have, for everyone’s safety, to be cancelled, but it is still hugely important that we remember with thanksgiving the sacrifices made during the Second World War, and the joy and relief felt across the nation on Victory in Europe Day.

“Our parents, grandparents and great grandparents had to sacrifice far more than we are, and for nearly six years. We have enjoyed peace in Europe since then, and this is our opportunity to give thanks for their sacrifice and to celebrate the end of hostilities in Europe, and all the good things that were achieved.

“From my high risk isolation, and as Her Majesty’s representative in Herefordshire I send my very best wishes to our veterans and their families, and our friends working across the military charities, whilst also thanking all of those wonderful people across this county who are working so hard in this present crisis to keep us safe. As Her Majesty the Queen said “we shall meet again”.

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/983/commemorate_ve_day_with_your_family_on_8_may

Defra launches Pick for Britain Website

Pick for Britain helps bring workers and employers together and ensures the UK can continue to deliver the best quality British fruit & veg for everyone to enjoy. The website collates growers, recruiters, and agencies that have job opportunities across the country. <https://pickforbritain.org.uk>

The Skills Toolkit - Department for Education

The Skills Toolkit is a new online platform, giving easy access to free, high quality digital and numeracy courses to help build up skills from home, for a better working future. More details at <https://theskillstoolkit.campaign.gov.uk/>

Help us help you get the treatment you need – NHS

The NHS is reminding us that we can still contact our GP, 111 online or call 111 for help. If you are told to go to hospital, you must go. The NHS will give you the care you need.

Herefordshire Safeguarding Board

A new Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information Bulletin from Herefordshire Safeguarding Boards and Partnerships is now available on their website at <https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk>. It outlines local and national resources to ensure that adults, children and young people have access to the support and services they need.

Domestic Abuse Guidance

For anyone who feels they are at risk of abuse, it is important to remember that there is help and support available, including police response, online support, helplines, refuges and other services. You are not alone. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-and-domestic-abuse/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse>

Recycling centres

I have raised the on going closure of the recycling centres and can report that due to the shift in the Government advice Herefordshire Council will be implementing plans for increasing access to the recycling centres. We realise that this has been a difficult aspect of the lock down for residents and thank you for your patience. I am pleased to say that there has not been an increase in fly tipping (although there has been fly tipping) over this period so well done everyone for coping so magnificently.

Flooding

One of the reasons that Herefordshire Council was able to be so agile in its response to the virus was that all the emergency co-ordinators were already working on the flooding that so impacted the county. I will continue to monitor the situation and am more than happy to receive individual updates from those who suffered in the floods. I have recently been appointed to the position of vice chair of the Lugg Internal Drainage Board which oversees and carries out drainage in the defined area of the board. I hope that this will increase my knowledge of flooding and land drainage. It will also sit well alongside my role as chair of the Nutrient Management Board which

is working to bring the Lugg into favourable conservation status by reducing the level of phosphate in the water. Land drainage is part of this picture.

We are also planning to build a number of constructed integrated wetlands to reduce the P at the outfall of the smaller sewage treatment works in the catchment. This should not only benefit the water quality of the river but also increase bio diversity and provide opportunities for carbon sequestration. The decision to proceed with the first 6 is imminent. Without such measures the housebuilding industry in the Lugg catchment is at a halt which is having a devastating impact on companies in the area.

The NHS 'Help us to help you' campaign

The NHS is asking councillors to help raise awareness of a new campaign to encourage the public to seek the urgent care and treatment they need. New findings show that four in ten people are too concerned about being a burden on the NHS at this time to seek help from their GP, while data suggests that A&E attendance so far in April has been about 50 per cent lower than this time last year.

The campaign – including digital adverts, posters and social media featuring NHS staff – aims to reassure the public that it is safe to access urgent and emergency services for stroke, heart attack, and other killer conditions, as well as scheduled appointments, vaccinations and maternity services.

Herefordshire Council / Covid 19 response – a summary

Prior to the Lockdown on 24th March considerable work had already been done across the country on preparing for the emergency. A National Plan - Project Shield identifies the most vulnerable in each community with an intention to protect and ensure support is available to them as well as the rest of the community. Early on it was important to establish local lead contacts who could coordinate volunteers and help in identifying vulnerable residents who came forward from the 80,000 letters from Herefordshire Council and Parish correspondence.

Each Herefordshire Council ward is allocated an officer and assistant who reports to the council, who are the identified lead authority for our area reporting to Govt. This then gives a line of communication in both directions feeding information, concerns and ensuring support to vulnerable and branded as Talk Community in our county. Those who are identified as most vulnerable approx 5,000 are receiving a phone call from officers to double check. A management Board of officers headed by the Chief Executive Alistair Neil oversees the project.

Herefordshire has to date received over £11 million from the Government in two instalments to meet initial extra costs of the virus . It is early days to know the financial implications but I expect more funding will follow. Herefordshire Council has redeployed 200 members of staff, with home working for all staff apart from front line – no staff have been furlonged . Liaison with Wye Valley Trust (Hereford Hospital) and residential care sector is important as the council is also the commissioner of social care. The County Hospital released capacity with many other services e.g cancer care transferred to the Nuffield. The Council has and is procuring additional care provision for hospital discharges by entering into agreements with local hotel chains.

Locally to date figures of infections and mortalities have been much lower than our neighbouring authorities apart from Powys. The concern now must be to maintain vigilance by ALL the public to prevent an increase in outbreaks in our county now and when the unlock begins. The enemy was well defined 75 years ago this time it is invisible, potentially deadly and can be brought to our community at any time.

The provision of personal protection equipment (PPE) has been a major problem particularly sourcing products of the correct standard of protection. There is a currently an international demand with the production in the recent past of all these products chiefly manufactured in the far east. While the focus has always been on the NHS frontline the home care and residential care sector have always been lagging behind. The demands are huge with the Herefordshire (non NHS) care requirements going from no use six weeks ago to over 18,000 per day. The Council has identified various sources of supply and although it remains a significant challenge we are managing to meet the need at the moment.

In other departments vigilance is required for vulnerable adults and children in certain domestic settings; 62 of our 92 schools are in some way open being attend by many but numbers should be higher, some attendees include children in local authority care or protection . Enforcement teams are working with police on lockdown issues and fly tipping.

An additional £62 million has been allocated to Herefordshire from the Government to support local business with various rate relief grants including hospitality and Leisure grants . Currently £45.5 million has been paid out to just under 4,000 Herefordshire companies. There has been a good take up but can I urge any businesses in the ward that pay business rates please to ensure they get and apply for the grant they are entitled to - details on smallbusinessgrants@herefordshire.gov.uk

Local information on services and advice www.Herefordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

National information www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19
www.gov.uk/coronavirus

HEREFORDSHIRE MEANS BUSINESS

Penrhos Spirits Lyonshall

In a bit of uplifting news and showing the agility and willingness to adapt of Herefordshire businesses...

Penrhos Spirits from Lyonshall have been producing gin from their distillery based on their farm since December 2018 using the fruit from their orchards as their main ingredient. The future looked bright and the end of March saw their gins released in 25 bars across London under the Drake and Morgan brand.

The untimely intervention of Covid - 19 meant all the plans that were in place had to be postponed and although sales have not completely dried up they were severely affected. With an abundance of alcohol the obvious route seemed to be to make a hand sanitizer. HMRC have a very stringent set of

rules to follow but these were relaxed and a formula from the World Health Organisation was published to give guidance on the recipe.

Penrhos work very closely with Celtic Marches Cider. The two companies got together to produce a hand sanitizer called Two Cousins which is available in 1 litre bottles. If you would like further details please contact them on 01544231467.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR LOCAL BUSINESS

Many of our local business are supporting our community with supplying delivery of groceries, take away food and other items.

They are too many too list here in case I miss someone but they will be on your local websites. Please support them. If this crisis teaches us anything it is the importance of local community and a local economy.



The day to day functioning of the council is continuing....remember when all we worried about were potholes?

The lack of traffic is helping Balfour get on top of the pothole issue but Please report any problems on highways or footpaths using the links below or phone 01432261800.

[Go onto Herefordshire Council website and download the pothole App to help report potholes](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes)

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes>

<https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-a-pothole>

Report fly tipping by either calling the Contact Centre on 01432 261800 or by logging the fly tipping via the council website on the links below as your

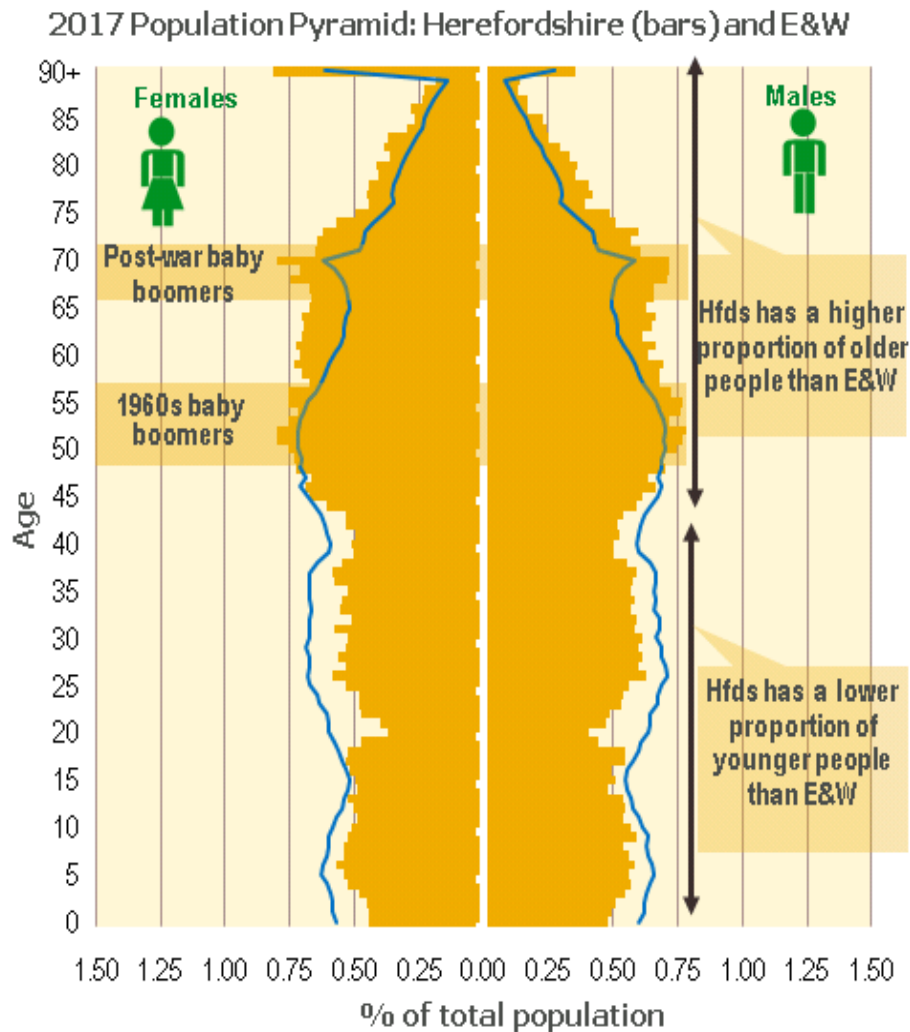
https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200226/report_a_problem/98/fly_tipping

You can use the following link to report problems on a footpath or bridleway – for instance, at this time of year, a footpath might get ploughed and the farmer forget to reinstate it...

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/footpaths-byways-and-bridleways/cg-report-prov-problem>

Other information.

Here's something for the statisticians amongst you....



HEREFORDSHIRE POPULATION PRESSURES

This diagram I think really gives the background to many of the economic, health and social pressures in the UK and Herefordshire today.

The central spine has separated males and females and each horizontal bar represents a year and the number of Herefordians in the county of that age. The blue line is the England & Wales average.

The orange mass is the Herefordshire population and you can see clearly that the bulk of our population is from 45 to 70 years. It clearly shows the peaks of the post war baby boomers and the

1960s boomers and how they are rapidly approaching retirement. In Herefordshire case the mature sections are higher than the national average and below 40 years they are lower.

This diagram tells us nothing new but I think the graphic is powerful. It shows the pressures that are here and coming on our health services, why we need to bring in workers to support businesses , the pinch point at 20 shows the lack of higher education, lowering birth rates and what that means for local schools, and the need to sustain and attract more younger people to provide a balanced economy, support education and provide the appropriate levels of support to the maturing generation.

AS ALWAYS.....

COVID 19 Outdoor Access Guidance

Please follow Government advice:

-  One outing for exercise per day - walk, run or cycle, alone or with members of your household. 
- Stay local – don't get in your car to drive to other areas. 
-  **2m** Keep your distance - Stay at least 2 m away from other people when out and about, but do call a friendly greeting or give a wave.
- Avoid contact – Avoid touching surfaces as far as possible. Use gloves or hand gel if you need to open gates. 
-  Dogs need to be kept on a lead or under close control, do not let them approach others and as always pick up and remove all waste.
- Remember it's lambing time, so give a wide berth to farms where possible, don't take dogs into fields with lambs or other young animals in them and avoid disturbing any wildlife or livestock. 

Symptoms and what to do

Do not leave your home if you have either:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
-
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

To protect others, do not go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Stay at home.



Use the [111 online coronavirus service](#) to find out what to do.

Only call 111 if you cannot get help online.