

**OCTOBER UPDATE From LLangarron ward Councillor
Elissa Swinglehurst, serving the parishes of**

Welsh Newton and Llanrothal, Llangarron, Marstow, Sellack, Bridstow and Peterstow

As we say farewell to the long days of summer my thoughts turn to the rain that is, even as I write, running down the roads and filling up the watercourses. Last year some of our residents were flooded out of their homes by water shedding off fields and the volume of water in the rivers bursting banks. Llangarron parish council is taking active steps to work with local landowners and farmers to increase understanding of this issue and to arrive at some solutions. It is to their credit that they have taken this on and are liaising with the council, EA, Wye Usk, AONB and others to do what they can to prevent a repeat of last year. Another parish has clear, reactive emergency plans in place to help residents who are dealing with a crisis, including flooding. This is such a useful role for parish councils who are local to the problem, have a detailed understanding of local conditions and who are known to local residents.

Planning

You will recall that I flagged the government's consultation on the white paper in my last report. I have to say that I do have a range of concerns about the reform as it stands and hope to see them addressed as it proceeds. There must be no undermining of NDPs that parishes have worked so hard to put in place and the proposals around section 106/CIL or developer contributions still needs some work for it to fit in Herefordshire. Overall there is a 'one size fits all' overly simplistic approach that really won't work. It is also very unclear how the government views 'countryside' as against 'green belt'. The standard methodology algorithm (an algorithm, what could possibly go wrong?) will result in a substantial increase in housing requirement but, since we can't provide the houses we are already supposed to be building I don't see how increasing the target is going to help. Be a bit more to the point if we could do something about the fact that out of 5000 permissions only 13% are being built.

Activities

So far this month (and, to quote The Carpenters, 'it's only just begun') I have chaired the Nutrient Management Board meeting where, with public included, we had over 100 attendees. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kQT4EVsf4M>

It's great to see the level of interest in the health of the river. The contribution from Natural Resources Wales was probably a highlight for me as they gave a preview into the review of river health in Wales that has, in part at least, been triggered by pressure from the WUF over poultry units in Powys. Broadly speaking, and heavily caveated, they said that it was their expectation that most of the rivers will be found to be failing the conservation target for Phosphate and they accepted that the 'Welsh' bit of the Lugg, needs to be seen as part of a whole system. This is fantastic progress. However, we can't put all the attention into the IPU's in Powys, it is true that they are an important part of the equation but they are not all there is to agricultural diffuse pollution. The growing of maize is also a big problem that is resulting in compaction, soil loss and pollution and it is certainly more of an issue locally than IPU's.

I also hosted a briefing for members on the issue with speakers from the Environment Agency, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water, Wye Usk Foundation and Herefordshire Council. It was very well attended by Herefordshire Councillors and we were pleased to welcome colleagues from Powys Council.

I have also been in a meeting with Jesse Norman MP who is being very supportive and working with his colleagues in Whitehall and Westminster to address the twin catastrophes of the ecological collapse of the Wye and the moratorium on planning in the Lugg catchment (which has cost the county an estimated £300m).

The constant note throughout these meetings is that the regulators have to regulate, the environment agency have to start enforcing the 2018 water rules for farming. I think that we will be seeing a change in approach, a greater determination to protect our river. The fact of the matter is that the river is running out of time, no one wants to see it in the condition it got into this year, no one wants to see the death of cygnets, the loss of the ranunculus, the consequential loss of invertebrate life and fish – surely, no one wants that.

Full Council

The full council meeting held on the 9th Oct is available to view on the council's YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bU-6QeTivuk>

The meeting began with a minute's silence in memory of Cllr Bernard Hunt. In my experience of him Cllr Hunt was a dedicated public servant, hardworking, wise and kindly in his dealings with less experienced councillors. I join all my colleagues in extending my condolences to his family.

I proposed a notice of motion as follows: A recent study has shown that the UK population of Hedgehogs has declined from around 30 million to only 1 million. Whilst it is not yet a European Protected Species it is a British mammal where the population is in steep decline and I am calling upon our executive to please consider ways in which Herefordshire Council can include measures for adaptation, mitigation and for the protection of Hedgehogs to a level comparable to that required for European Protected Species.

It was a cross party motion, seconded by Cllr Yolande Watson of Kerne Bridge, who is a great hedgehog lover and expert.

I am pleased to report that after a really fascinating debate the motion passed with 100% support from the all councillors. Cllr. Watson along with Cllr Milln explained the relevance of the Hedgehog to the ancient area of Archenfield and why it is the symbol for Ross on Wye.

<http://www.playross.com/ross-hedgehog-care.html#>

There was even a suggestion that the Hedgehog might become an emblem for the whole of Archenfield – maybe even Herefordshire (along with the Bull of course).

Apart from the hedgehog item there was discussion around the Financial Outturn report, the reopening of Hereford Leisure Pool, the review of governance structures (basically committee or cabinet or something in between) and the leader's report. A range of public questions were put which were all challenging in one way or another.

KEEP HEREFORDSHIRE WARM

This service is available to access and give advice on domestic heating
The Freephone number is 0800 677 1432 and the advice line is open from
Monday to Friday, 9.00 to 17.00.

There is also a dedicated webpage which may be of help, but I would definitely
advise giving them a call.

<https://keepherefordshirewarm.co.uk/grants-and-funding/>

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

**Report fly tipping. It will be dealt with in a much quicker time frame. by
either calling the Contact Centre on 01432 261800 or by logging the fly
tipping via the council website on the links below**

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200226/report_a_problem/98/fly ti
pping](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200226/report_a_problem/98/fly_tipping)

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/footpaths-
byways-and-bridleways/cg-report-prow-problem](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/footpaths-byways-and-bridleways/cg-report-prow-problem)

If you wish to make a claim as a result of damage to your

vehicle <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/2>

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Herefordshire
Council



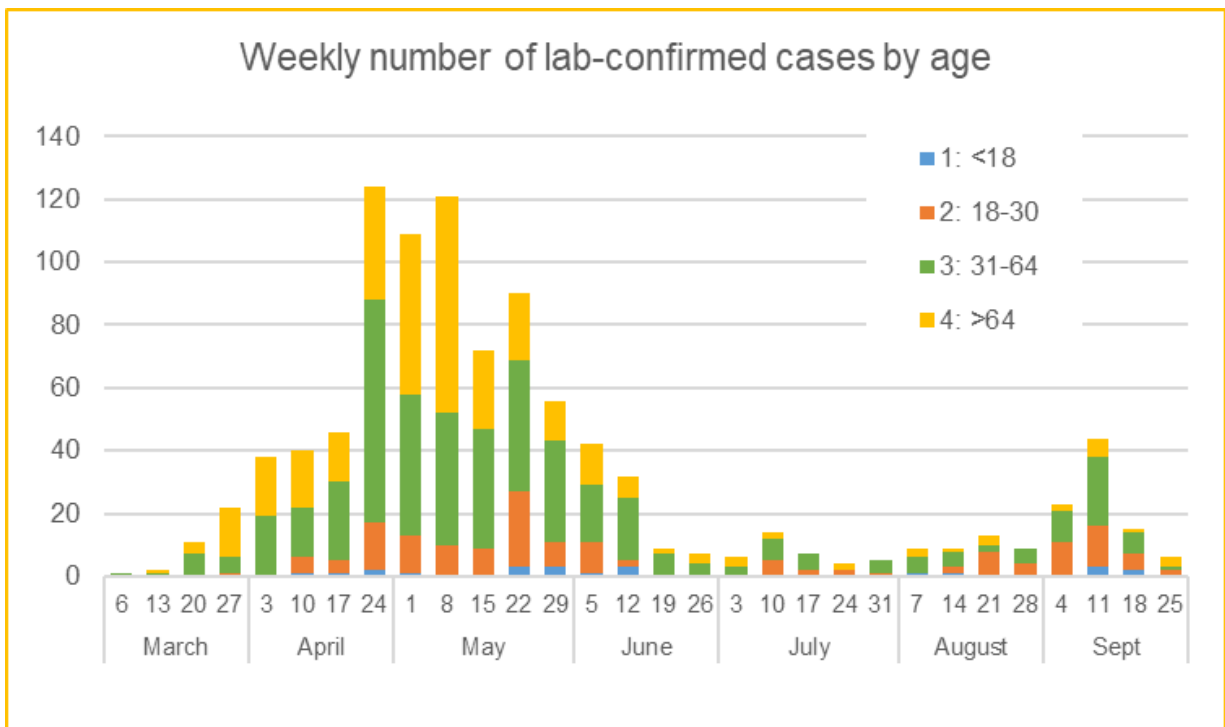
Covid -19 Herefordshire

There have been **no further deaths of Herefordshire residents involving COVID-19** so the total remains at 128. Only nine of these have been recorded since early June.

The total number of positive **lab-confirmed cases** in Herefordshire throughout the course of the pandemic is now 997 (23rd Sept). This number of cases is similar to that reported throughout much of the summer (other than during the farm outbreak), and is low both in absolute terms, and compared to other areas. However, random fluctuations and small numbers make it difficult to interpret trends. Since September rates have risen and until recently shadowed the rise seen in England, albeit at a lower level. Lab-confirmed cases since the beginning of August have a much younger profile than during the peak in April and May, with 33% aged 18-30 compared to 14% previously. This is likely to be due to the wider eligibility of testing now.

Three **outbreaks in care homes** have been identified through mass swabbing during September: currently there is only one with new cases identified in the last 14 days. There has been one **community outbreak**, linked to The Marches GP surgery (Leominster). There has also been one in a residential care and education setting in Wales just over the border from us involving positive staff members who are Herefordshire residents.

Since September there have been four schools/colleges where a single pupil/student has tested positive, including John Kyrle Ross on Wye.



Economic impacts for Herefordshire

Unemployment levels in Herefordshire are at their highest level since modern records began at 5,100 people aged 16+ with 1,000 aged between 16-24. The figure is 2,000 higher than previous peak in 2008-9 recession. Worryingly the increase is higher than national average and we started from a lower base.

A total of 24,800 people have been furloughed in the county with 9,300 self-employed claims since those schemes began.

Latest Information & Advice

For all the latest guidance on the changes and help available, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

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

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

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

For general advice on a range of issues please log onto the Wish website

<https://www.wisherefordshire.org/>

Stay Safe  **Keep Healthy**  **Support Local** 

SAFE  **HEREFORDSHIRE**

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.