

## September 2025 – Sutton Walls – Ward Report

### **New Transport Hub at Hereford Station**

A new transport hub outside Hereford station is being built to coordinate people's journeys and support more sustainable transport.



The hub will integrate key travel connections, making it easier to move around and connect by train, bus, car, bike, taxi or on foot. This forms part of a wider Local Transport Plan shaped by public input, with strong support for better bus services, active travel options and the Bypass.

Enhancing the front of Hereford's historic railway station, the development will support

multiple modes of getting around and create an exciting urban space that ties together local heritage, public and private transport and active travel. The hub will feature:

- New bus stands and layovers
- Taxi and car parking areas (including commuter and short-term parking)
- Covered cycle storage and lockers

Picture: Cllr Elissa Swinglehurst (Deputy Council Leader) Philip Price, Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure, and representatives of the contractors McPhillips.

*I hope that you will be pleased to learn that the awful section of road at the Old School House junction at the turn to Moreton-on-Lugg is scheduled for resurfacing later this month. Well overdue but extremely welcome. When we persevere, we get there!*

**I was pleased to see Herefordshire Council moved quickly to ensure critical community equipment and technology-enabled care services continued without disruption for residents across the county. This is important to support vulnerable people in living in their homes and easing pressure on our hospital.**

**The change came after the previous provider, NRS Healthcare, informed the council that it would be unable to continue operating beyond the end of July. NRS were contracted to provide a range of community equipment and technology-led support services to thousands of Herefordshire residents. These include such things as shower chairs, toilet frames, commodes, hoists and specialist equipment for children with disabilities plus technological devices such as lifeline units, falls detectors, smoke alarms and 24/7/365 emergency call monitoring.**

**Therefore, from 1 August 2025, two new council-commissioned providers took responsibility, delivering these services to approximately 12,000 residents. Hoople Ltd will now deliver the Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES), which provides items such as shower chairs, toilet frames, commodes, hoists, pressure care mattresses and medical beds, along with specialist equipment for children with disabilities. Careium UK Limited took over the Technology Enabled Care Service (TECS), which includes lifeline units, pendants, falls detectors, smoke alarms and GPS devices, alongside the 24/7/365 emergency call monitoring. The Council team moved quickly to ensure a consistent service with minimum disruption to vulnerable residents.**

**Congratulations to our younger residents on their GCSE and A Level results. Herefordshire students managed an impressive 98.4% A-level pass rate, and in GCSE 68.5% achieved a grade 4 or above in all subjects which in both results are above the national average in the West Midlands and England.**



A decision by Herefordshire Council to acquire and refurbish the John Haider building in central Hereford will offer 28 additional self-contained apartments for people needing emergency accommodation.

The number of local people presenting to the council as needing emergency accommodation has almost doubled in the past two years, and there is currently a shortage of suitable accommodation. This means that people

may be housed in private sector dwellings (where available) or in budget hotel/bed-and-breakfast style accommodation.

To help address this, the council is investing nearly £3.8 Million to acquire and fully refurbish the John Haider building in central Hereford, bringing the building back into good condition to provide 28 high quality, self-contained, apartments.

The decision follows Full Council approval of the outline business case in July 2024 which indicated cost savings of £600,000 per annum and a detailed consultation process. Work should begin this year with first occupants moving in autumn 2026.



## **h.Art September 6<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>**

This annual county wide exhibition of local crafts returns with 128 venues across Herefordshire and over the borders. Admission is free to all venues, and it brings together the talent of local residents against the backcloth of our

wonderful countryside. Details can be found on [h-art.org.uk](http://h-art.org.uk)

## **GENERATING OUR OWN FUNDING FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN HEREFORDSHIRE**

The business park at Rotherwas Skylon Park was largely owned by Herefordshire Council and following the building of the Access Road in 2009 it was declared an Enterprise Zone. A key benefit of having a government designated Enterprise Zone is that we are able to retain 100% of business rates generated in the specified area for a defined period (50% is normal retained by government). The rates retention scheme has been in existence at the Hereford Enterprise Zone since 1/4/2013 and is due to continue until 31/3/2038.

Whilst the Enterprise Zone has been in existence for a number of years there is a time lag in generating significant new funds, as land is remediated, sold and developed out. The Valuation Office have also had a significant backlog in valuing buildings for rates payments following the impact of Covid. From the balance of income from 2023/24 and 2024/25 there is currently a reserve available of circa £1.4m available to support economic development activity.

That funding will support a growth programme for the whole of the county which will include:

- Business Forums to improve engagement, network, collaboration to catalyse growth.
- Scale up support for high growth, or potential high growth businesses in target sectors.
- Research & Development innovation fund to enable investment in automation, AI, and innovation improving productivity.
- Business hubs/ co-working space in hubs in the market towns
- Cyber/ digital sectoral growth programme – building on local cluster strengths, a specific and targeted programme to enable the growth of a key local sector.
- Tourism – Tourism marketing to grow our visitor economy
- Skills and development programme

The picture is of the Cyber Centre which supports the fast-growing sector.

