

October 2026 – Ward Report – Sutton Walls

This month I would first like to report on the public meeting held at Marden Parish Hall to give residents an opportunity to hear more details of the proposed planning application at The Volunteer Inn for 54 dwellings.

Approximately 100 residents attended and many views and opinions were discussed. Among the foremost of these were:

- Re-opening the pub
- Access
- Drainage

A show of hands revealed 100% support for re-opening the pub. I am strongly in favour of this. It was argued that the pub is un-viable. I argue that if the pub was separated from the housing development, then the 'open market' would make the viability decision. It would be a matter for the buyer and no longer a matter for the applicant in this planning proposal.

The other matters are being considered, and one hopes that when the application comes forward that everything has been considered. The Planning Committee will require to see these issues correctly dealt with.



A new bursary backed by Herefordshire Council will help more local people access higher education and study for degrees here in the county.

The **Herefordshire Futures Bursary**, offered through Hereford College of Arts and Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College, will provide eligible students with **£1,000 for each year of full-time undergraduate study, up to £3,000**, or £500 per year for eligible part-time study.

Priority will be given to applicants from disadvantaged communities, low-income households and those who were eligible for free school meals in further education during 2025/26. Other Herefordshire residents facing financial barriers to higher education may also be considered.

The bursary forms part of the council's work with local education providers to create stronger routes from education into higher-skilled employment, helping local people develop their careers while building the skills needed by Herefordshire employers.

Together with NMITE, the county's higher education providers offer opportunities in areas including creative and digital industries, engineering, technology, health and other professional careers.

Applications are open now for eligible students beginning courses in September 2026. Applicants must live in Herefordshire and apply for and accept a place on an eligible course.

Prospective students should contact their chosen institution for eligibility criteria, application deadlines and details of how to apply.



Work to improve the reliability and safety of the **Commercial Road and Blueschool Street junction in Hereford** will begin on 12 October.

The existing traffic signal system is being replaced with modern, more reliable equipment to help keep traffic moving and reduce the risk of faults causing disruption. Improvements will also be made to pedestrian crossings and vehicle detection technology.

Works will run from **12 October to 4 December 2026**. The junction will remain open to traffic for the majority of this period, with temporary three-way traffic signals in operation while the permanent signals are replaced.

Daytime closures will be required on Union Street on 20 and 21 October, from 7am to 5pm. Signed diversion routes will be in place.

The scheme forms part of wider investment in modernising traffic signals around Hereford city centre, with further work planned at Station Approach and Stonebow Road.

Residents and road users are being advised to plan ahead and allow extra time, particularly during busy periods.

Updates will be available through Herefordshire Highways social media channels, the council website and the interactive roadworks map.

Could you use your skills and experience to make a difference to children and young people in Herefordshire?

Schools across the county are looking for people to volunteer as school governors – and you don't need to be an education expert to get involved.

School governors help shape the strategic direction of a school, influencing important decisions about education, resources and how schools support their pupils. It's also a great opportunity to develop skills in leadership, finance, decision-making and constructive challenge.

One Herefordshire governor said:

"Governance is incredibly rewarding. I now feel I am part of something, able to make a difference and advocate in a way that no other volunteer role would enable me to."

Governors come from all backgrounds. What matters is being committed, curious and willing to learn – and bringing your own experience and perspective to the role.

Interested in becoming a governor? Contact the Governor Services team at governorservice@herefordshire.gov.uk to find out more.



Preparatory works are underway for the first phase of Hereford Bypass being the new link between the A49 and the A465, improving access from the southwest of the county and South Wales, and helping to reduce traffic on Belmont Road, Asda roundabout and nearby rural routes currently used as shortcuts.

In the longer term, the scheme will form the anchor point for the full bypass route to the West of Hereford, which, when delivered, will alleviate traffic congestion through the city, and unlock land that could support up to 14,000 new homes and employment space for up to 10,000 jobs. Herefordshire is required by government to plan for 27,000 homes in the county by 2041, and the bypass forms an important part of enabling that growth in a planned and sustainable way.

There is still active opposition to the building of any new road but I believe the overwhelming majority of residents and businesses believe this is long overdue, and it continues to be top priority for the current administration.