

Herefordshire Councillor's report.

The sun is shining, school holidays are beginning and most Covid restrictions were lifted in England on July 19th as the 4th stage of the "Roadmap" was reached. A cause for celebration for some, much too soon for others and the need to be cautious and keep vigilant probably the majority view.

Covid Update

Cases continue to increase here and everywhere as society opens up. The latest data for Herefordshire was on July 10th with 116 cases per 100,000 . Cases in England averaged 350 per 100,000.

The Vaccination roll-out in the county has been very successful with 86% of eligible adults receiving their first dose and 71% their second dose. Drop-in clinics are now available in Hereford for those aged 18 or over for their first or second vaccinations. There is no need to book, just turn up. Dates and times are on the Council website. It is vital to book second doses when invited and to persuade those in the younger age groups who may be reluctant that their vaccination will help to protect others.

Regular, rapid testing is available to everyone and home testing kits are available in the market towns.

Although cases are rising particularly among younger adults and teenagers, hospital admissions remain low. Only one case in Hereford Hospital was reported in the week ending July 10th.

Free Swimming Lessons

Children's lives have been particularly disrupted for 16 months with home schooling, sports and activities curtailed and end of term and end of year celebrations often cancelled at short notice. The Council and HALO Leisure are arranging holiday activities which will help many families, especially those unable to take a proper holiday.

FREE Swimming lessons are being offered to children at all 4 HALO pools in the county during the summer holidays The HALO Leisure website has all the details. The lessons are provided as part of the Council's Covid Recovery Plan, investment of £6m to support economic recovery and improve wellbeing.

Holiday Activities Programme

Under this Government funded initiative, primary and secondary children eligible for free school meals can book 16 hours of free activities per week, per child for up to 4 weeks in the summer holidays. Each child that attends will also receive a free healthy meal during the session.

As a school governor at Kimbolton Primary School and Earl Mortimer College it has been good to attend face to face meetings again and I appreciate all the hard work of teachers and other school staff in recent weeks and months. I hope next term fewer children will need to be sent home to self-isolate and there can be a more regular school routine for all pupils.

Flooding Webinar

There will be a Flooding Webinar on Thursday August 12th from 6.30pm to 7.30pm open to all parish councils. Issues will include preparing for, responding to and recovering from flooding in Herefordshire. The Environment Agency and the Fire and Rescue service will be among those taking part. The zoom meeting which will be of interest to communities who have suffered from flooding during recent winters can be accessed by contacting Resilience.Team@herefordshire.gov.uk

Meanwhile the Defra funded Natural Flood Management project for several catchments including the Brimfield Brook ended recently . The NFM final report from Bethany Lewis and her team has been issued. £47,900 has been spent in the catchment and measures have included 5 attenuation areas, 9 leaky dams, 8 cross drains and a rainwater harvesting system installed to slow and reduce

flood risk. A flood warning station is being installed in Orleton which should benefit Brimfield. The Council is hoping to obtain more Government funding to continue and add to these projects. Property Flood Resilience grants have helped a number of residents including in Brimfield. The Brimfield Flood Group hopes to hold its AGM in September. Little Hereford residents affected by flooding will also be welcome at the meeting.

Local headlines

1. We are still
2. awaiting a decision on the 30mph Speed Limit extension scheme in Wyson Lane.
3. We also continue to press Herefordshire Council and Highways England on the need for an unsuitable for long vehicles warning sign on the A49 Brimfield Bypass. I have been in contact with Bruce Evans of Herefordshire Council. Photos sent by a resident illustrate the problem caused by HGVs getting stuck in our narrow lanes and having to reverse. By the time they turn off the A49 it is too late.
4. The new SID installed on the Tenbury Road has been a welcome addition to road safety. It reminds us of our speeds even if a selfish minority will ignore any warning sign.
5. There will be a Temporary road Closure Order in Wyson Lane from August 16th. Gully installation and drainage works are being carried out at or near the entrance to Pinecroft to the A49 overpass. The work is expected to last for 5 days, so please be patient with the traffic diversions.

And Finally

Please support the forthcoming Brimfield Community Weekend including the Village Show and St Michael's Hospice Coffee Morning and the Little Hereford Fete. These are the first major social events since March 2020 and a chance for people to meet up and support our local organisations and charities in a safe and enjoyable way. Please support our local shops and businesses too and hospitality as they try to recover from three difficult lockdowns. They have supported us so I hope we will continue to support them this summer.

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