

# WYCHAVON

*News, stories and services for residents*

Summer 2026

## *Regenerating* **Riverside**



**Lido  
investment  
Boosting  
biodiversity**



**£5  
million**  
*support fund*



[www.wychavon.gov.uk](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk)

# Contents

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Transforming Worcestershire       | 2  |
| Budget boost                      | 3  |
| Riverside regeneration            | 4  |
| £5 million support fund announced | 6  |
| Loos matter                       | 8  |
| Lido transformation               | 9  |
| Wychavon Town update              | 10 |
| Understanding hormones            | 12 |
| SCRAP fly-tipping                 | 13 |
| Growing Wychavon                  | 14 |
| Meet your stars                   | 16 |
| Splash feedback                   | 18 |
| Rolling forward                   | 18 |
| Let's end homelessness together   | 19 |
| Explore & Discover                | 20 |
| Pedal power                       | 22 |
| Renting reform                    | 23 |
| Boosting biodiversity             | 24 |
| Vaccine check                     | 26 |
| Unfair sanction                   | 27 |
| Beautiful design                  | 27 |
| Mast campaign                     | 28 |
| Boardwalk upgrade                 | 29 |
| Distinctive welcome               | 29 |
| Energy support                    | 30 |
| Waste changes                     | 31 |
| Sixways tribute                   | 31 |
| Wychavon Councillors              | 32 |

## Stay in the know with Wychavon

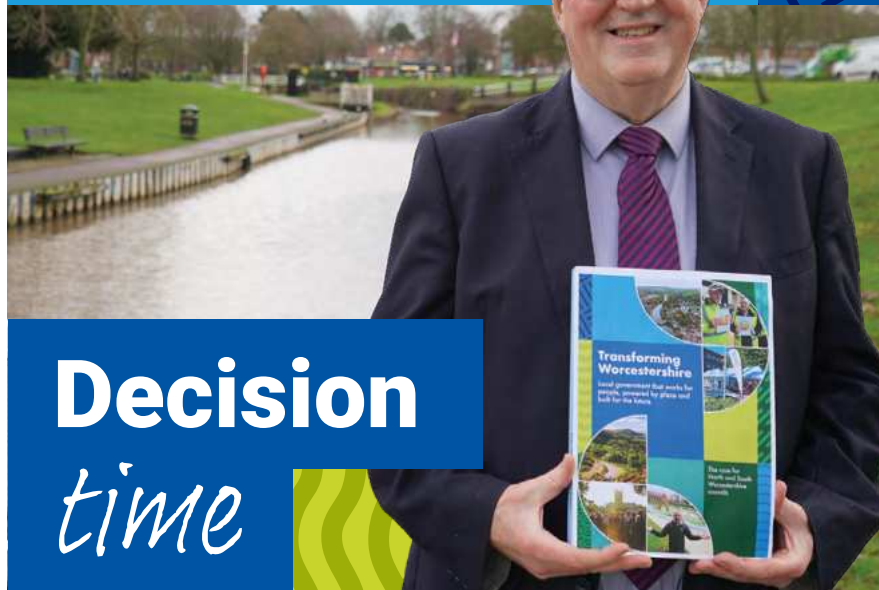
- ✓ Weekly planning lists
- ✓ Waste and recycling information
- ✓ Events and activity updates and much more

Sign up at

[www.wychavon.gov.uk/email-alerts](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk/email-alerts)



## Transforming Worcestershire



### Work continues to prepare for the biggest change to local councils in 50 years.

Earlier this year, the Government held a public consultation on proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Worcestershire. Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their views.

The plans, submitted to the Government at the end of last year, set out two options for replacing us, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Malvern Hills, Worcester, Wyre Forest and Worcestershire County Council with new unitary authorities.

One option would create a South Worcestershire and a North Worcestershire Unitary Council to provide all services for their areas. The other would see a single unitary council created for Worcestershire.

At the time we went to press, we were still waiting for the Government's decision on which option they preferred.

[Visit our Local Government Reorganisation page for the latest information.](#)

All Worcestershire councils are already working together to put measures in place to ensure reorganisation, in whatever form, can happen smoothly and with minimal disruption to the services residents rely on.

#### Cllr Richard Morris, Leader of Wychavon, said:

"We didn't ask for reorganisation, it's being imposed on us by the Government. But if we must have change, then we have consistently said that a two-unitary council model offers the best balance between scale and local accountability. It is also the one you overwhelmingly backed. By the time you read this, we should know whether the Government has listened to you.

"However, whatever the decision, our priority now is to continue delivering for our residents and businesses, while working with partners across the county to make sure reorganisation is introduced in a way that works for everyone in Worcestershire."



# Budget boost

Millions of extra pounds are being invested into communities, regeneration, business growth and greener public buildings across Wychavon this year – while we have frozen our share of Council Tax again.



Our budget for this year includes an extra £3.7 million for services. On top of that, we have made further funding available for significant investment across a range of projects.

These include:



**£400,000** for community grants.



**An extra £412,000** to support the growth of small and medium-sized businesses.



**£7.2 million** to improve and enhance Evesham and Pershore Leisure Centres including energy-efficiency measures. Droitwich Spa Leisure Centre is already being upgraded as part of a £15 million scheme.



**£100,000** for energy efficiency schemes for community buildings and biodiversity improvements for communities.

We have also confirmed details of our £5 million We Are Wychavon Support Fund, which you can read more about on pages six and seven.

This is on top of the multi-million-pound investments already being made into major regeneration and wellbeing projects, including Evesham Town Centre and Droitwich Spa Lido.

And we're doing all this while keeping our share of Council Tax on hold for the seventh time in nine years.

Our share of Council Tax for an average Band D property remains at £128.21 a year. That's less than £2.47 a week – cheaper than the average takeaway coffee on the high street.

It means we remain one of the lowest charging district councils in the country.

## Why did my Council Tax still go up this year?

If you are reading this article but thinking, 'Hang on, my Council Tax went up this year!' then you are not alone. Council Tax can be confusing, so here is a quick guide to how it works.

You pay Council Tax to five different organisations – us, Worcestershire County Council, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and a parish/town council (in some areas).

Each one of those organisations charges a different amount for its services (known as a Council Tax precept). These different amounts are added together to make your total Council Tax bill. We collect the money on behalf of all of them and then pass it on to other organisations. The graphic below shows how much each organisation keeps out of every pound in Council Tax you pay:

### Worcestershire County Council

74p

### West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

13p

### Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

5p

### Wychavon

5p

### Parish/town councils

3p

That's why, even though we froze our share of Council Tax this year, your overall bill still increased because other organisations raised theirs.

# Riverside regeneration

Globally recognised regeneration and property consultancy Savills has been chosen to help drive forward the transformation of the Riverside Shopping Centre site in Evesham.

Their role will be to advise us on attracting investment by securing the right partner to deliver a mixed-use scheme of housing, shops and leisure businesses.



Savills brings a wealth of expertise and a proven track record of involvement with high-profile regeneration projects similar to the one proposed for Evesham, including the landmark Lexicon development in Bracknell.

Savills' specialists also have expertise in market town and heritage-led regeneration, which will support our

vision to reconnect the town centre to Evesham's heritage assets. The appointment follows our purchase of the site in March with the help of a £4.5 million grant from Homes England. We also now own buildings in Market Square and several properties along Bridge Street.

An application to demolish the centre and multi-storey car park is expected to be considered in August. Work to appoint a demolition contractor is underway. The demolition itself can only start once the centre is empty and pre-commencement planning conditions are cleared. Home Bargains and a telecommunications company operating a mast on top of the centre have been given notice to leave. Relocation support is being offered to community organisations still operating within the Riverside. This means the demolition could get underway before the end of this year, although spring 2027 is a more likely start date.

The demolition could take up to 18 months to complete. Evesham Public Hall will be protected and preserved during the demolition process, ready to be brought back into use as part of the redevelopment.

  
**400+**  
people attended

## Public support

Thank you to everyone who came to our engagement and information event in April. About 400 people attended, with a similar number of online surveys completed. A whopping 97% of you supported the project in principle but are understandably keen to see the detail as we develop the proposed mixed-use scheme.

All your feedback from the event will help our future development partner create the proposed scheme.



## Key questions

### *Why* do we have to have houses? Why can't it just be shops and leisure?

Housing is included because a scheme with just shops and leisure businesses is unlikely to attract the investment needed to redevelop the site. More people living in the town centre will create footfall for businesses, helping create a vibrant mixed-use destination and support Evesham Town Centre's long-term future.

### *Can we* have a bowling alley, ice rink or something exciting like that?

We aren't ruling anything in or out. We understand why people would like to see attractions such as these in the town centre. Our job is to create the right conditions to attract these sorts of operators, but they will ultimately decide where to invest their money.

### *Will there* be enough parking once the multi-storey car park is demolished?

The multi-storey car park is in poor condition and currently underused. Evidence submitted to support the demolition application shows there is enough parking capacity across existing town centre car parks to meet demand. Parking provision to support the proposed mixed-use development will be fully considered during the planning process.

Read the full FAQs at [www.wychavon.gov.uk/riverside](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk/riverside).



## Inspiring ideas

Many of you have shared your special places, memories and landmarks to help shape plans for artwork around the Riverside regeneration site.

We want to transform the hoarding that will surround the site into a "Living Gallery" celebrating everything Evesham. The artwork will help limit the visual impact of the hoarding on the town centre while demolition work takes place.

Asparagus, the Bell Tower, Hampton Ferry, River Avon and Regal Cinema were among the features you wanted to see reflected in any artwork. You also wanted to see the town, and the wider Vale's, natural beauty celebrated.

Some 61% of you supported some of the hoarding being used as a legal graffiti space. You also wanted to see interactive elements, such as QR codes, used to bring the artwork to life.

Further community workshops are planned over the coming months to help create the final designs.



## Latest updates

[Sign up](#)  
[for our](#)  
[latest news](#)  
[e-newsletter](#)



or scan the QR code to stay up-to-date on the Riverside Regeneration project and all our other news.

# £5 MILLION *support fund announced*

Wychavon is investing £5 million over the next two years through the **We Are Wychavon Support Fund** to help residents, businesses and communities.

The fund will include a range of schemes designed to help people live healthier lives, learn valuable skills, access new opportunities, support thriving town centres and strengthen local communities.

Schemes will be designed so as many people as possible have the opportunity to benefit from them. Together, they will help us continue making a difference to the lives of local people, just as we have done for more than 50 years.



## Aims of the **We Are Wychavon Support Fund**

The fund will be delivered through four key themes:

### » *Supporting* **Wellness**

Helping residents live healthier, more active and connected lives by reducing barriers to leisure, learning and transport.

### » *Supporting* **Families and Young People**

Giving children the best possible start in life while ensuring families can access support when they need it most.

### » *Supporting* **Business**

Creating opportunities through skills, employment and business support initiatives that help local people and businesses thrive.

### » *Supporting* **Sustainable Communities**

Investing in local projects, community facilities and initiatives that strengthen communities, improve resilience and support long-term sustainability.

Schemes will be delivered in phases, with more being announced as the programme develops over the coming months.

Cllr Richard Morris, Leader of Wychavon, said:

“For more than 50 years, we have worked hard to improve the lives of our residents. The We Are Wychavon Support Fund is another example of that commitment in action. It’s about providing practical help where it can make the biggest difference, whether that is helping someone learn a new skill, supporting a family through a difficult period or strengthening a local community project.

“I’m delighted thousands of residents will have the opportunity to benefit from the fund over the next two years.”



- These are the schemes we will deliver in phase one:
- › **Free swimming** for under-16s
  - › **Free swimming** for over-60s
  - › **Free learn-to-swim** sessions for all ages
  - › **Reduced fares** for the Worcestershire On Demand bus
  - › One hour's **free parking**
  - › Targeted support to help **tackle youth unemployment**
  - › **Support for businesses** to create apprenticeships
  - › **Funding for families** facing financial hardship who do not qualify for existing support
  - › **Enhanced speech and language support** for children
  - › Ward Budgets enabling councillors to **support small-scale community projects** that do not qualify for existing grant schemes



## When will these schemes be available?

At the time the WYCHAVON magazine went to press, the detailed arrangements for individual schemes were still being finalised.

We will announce the launch of each scheme through our social media channels, latest news e-newsletter and website.

**Sign up for our email updates** to make sure you do not miss out.



**We're proud to be fighting back** against what experts are warning is a growing crisis caused by a lack of public toilets.

Much of England is drying up into what the Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) calls "public toilet deserts". Research from FOI requests to councils across the country revealed there are now 15,481 people for every public toilet in England, with the number of available facilities falling by 14% since 2016. Councils are not legally obliged to provide toilets and many choose to close them to save money.

But the society is warning "toilet deserts" are not just an inconvenience but have real consequences, with one in five people reporting they leave home less often due to a lack of facilities, while others restrict their fluid intake to reduce the risk of needing the toilet. There are also consequences for businesses as people spend less time in outdoor spaces, reducing footfall.

But here in Wychavon we're proud to be doing things differently. Since 2019, we have invested more than £1 million into our 11 blocks of public toilets. This includes a replacement block on Church Walk in Pershore to support visitors to Abbey Park. We have also rebuilt a modern block in Waterside,

Evesham and upgraded others to include energy-efficiency measures, Changing Places toilets, and baby-changing facilities as standard.

All of our toilets remain free to use and we have no plans to introduce charges, unlike many other areas.

Our investment was recognised at this year's Loo of the Year Awards, where we achieved our best set of results ever.

**Judges also praised our partnership with Hey Girls to provide free period products** to help tackle period poverty, with Viaduct Meadow in Evesham receiving the Period Dignity Award for England.

Cllr Beverley Hardman, our Executive Board Member for Environment, said:

"This report highlights exactly why we are so proud of our public toilets and why at a time when other councils are closing theirs or introducing charges, we're not only keeping ours free to use but continuing to invest in them."



Our conveniences **won Best Local Authority Public Toilets in the UK** for the fourth year in a row.



The loos in Droitwich's Lido Park were named the **Best Leisure Facility Public Toilet in England** for the first time.



The prize for **Best Car Park Public Toilets in the UK** once again went to Milestone Ground in Broadway.

# Lido transformation

We are making progress on the £12.5 million transformation of Droitwich Spa Lido.

A planning application is due to be submitted shortly and, if permission is approved, preliminary work could get underway before the end of the year.

The ambitious upgrade includes:

- ▶ A spa.
- ▶ A larger brine pool than originally proposed during the public consultation, located within the restored Art Deco building and returning a brine bath to the town for the first time in almost 20 years.
- ▶ A larger café.
- ▶ A new snack kiosk to serve customers of Lido Park and the Lido.
- ▶ Additional shower and changing facilities to complement the enhanced offer.
- ▶ Bistro on the upper level of the Art Deco building overlooking the pool.
- ▶ A new splash pad to replace the existing facility.
- ▶ Refurbishment of the existing changing rooms and showers, including new accessible facilities as requested during public consultation.
- ▶ An enhanced and safer entrance to the Lido from Worcester Road, including a dedicated footpath.
- ▶ Improvements to the car park.

It is expected the new-look Lido will be ready to use in spring/summer 2028.

An original proposal to relocate the café to the south end of the site was scrapped because of challenges rerouting utilities. This would have meant pumping sewage uphill, making the project more expensive and complex, while significantly impacting Lido Park. This would have made it unlikely planning permission would be granted. Concerns were also raised during public consultation about how accessible the new café would be due to its distance from the car park.

Alliance Leisure, one of the UK's most established leisure development specialists, with more than 25 years' experience, is helping us deliver the project.

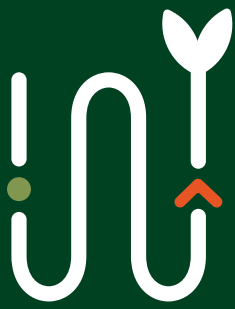
Cllr Richard Morris, Leader of Wychavon, said:

"This is a magnificent investment in Droitwich Spa, and one many towns and other Lidos up and down this country will be envious of.

"As a prominent supporter of the SALT (Save A Lido Today) campaign that helped restore the Lido with Wychavon's support in 2007, this scheme will protect the future of the Lido, so it continues to thrive and serve the community for generations to come."

[Find out more about the Lido project on our dedicated web page.](#)





# Wychavon *Town update*

Applications for thousands of new homes and 1.8 million sq ft of employment space at Wychavon Town are now being considered by planners.

At the time we went to press, four applications had been submitted, with more expected soon. These will shape the first phase of the new town up to 2041.

Summix and Homes England are seeking permission for 5,500 homes on land south of Worcestershire Parkway alongside a purpose-built town centre featuring employment, education, retail, leisure and healthcare facilities.

Hallam Land and the Spetchley Estate want to create 700,000 sq ft of employment space next to Junction 7 of the M5. The scheme could support around 1,000 jobs and forms the first phase of the Harkaway neighbourhood, which will eventually include homes, a primary school and community spaces.

Merton College and Brighton STM Developments have also submitted plans for 1.1 million sq ft of employment space in the proposed Woodhall neighbourhood to the west of the site.

[Visit the Wychavon Town website to find links to the applications.](#)



The applications are currently being assessed and are expected to go before our Planning Committee either towards the end of this year or early in 2027.

In June, we approved the Wychavon Town Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which provides guidance for developers and planners and sets out how the town's growth and infrastructure will be managed.

Once complete, Wychavon Town will include 10,000 energy-efficient homes, a new town centre, schools, parks, sports facilities, healthcare services, community spaces and 50 hectares of employment land.





## Infrastructure discussions

A second round of consultation will take place this autumn on the major infrastructure needed to support Wychavon Town.

We are preparing an Infrastructure Planning Application to create a joined-up delivery framework for roads, schools, healthcare, utilities, green spaces and public transport so they are planned alongside new homes from the start.

Once approved, it will allow funding for key infrastructure to be secured before major development begins, with other improvements delivered alongside housing as the town grows.

An initial consultation was held in July to outline the project's high-level vision. The next stage of consultation will explore proposals in more detail and gather feedback from communities.

The project team is also working to understand how people currently move around the area and access services, so new infrastructure supports existing travel patterns and connections.

This includes improving connectivity, protecting key routes and carefully phasing works to minimise disruption for existing communities while helping create a place that works for both current and future residents.

The application is expected to be submitted by the end of this year.



## Why no hospital?

One of the questions we are most often asked about Wychavon Town is why a new hospital is not planned as part of the development.

It's understandable people would expect one, especially with existing hospitals under pressure. But to understand why one is not planned, you need to understand how the NHS sees the future of healthcare.

In July 2025, the NHS published its ten-year health plan for England called Fit for the Future. The plan sets out three major changes in how healthcare will be delivered:

- ▶ **More care provided in communities and people's homes rather than hospitals.**
- ▶ **Greater use of technology and digital healthcare.**
- ▶ **A stronger focus on prevention and early intervention.**

Put simply, the NHS of the future will rely more on community diagnostic centres, outpatient hubs and remote monitoring of patients at home where safe to do so. Hospital stays are expected to become shorter and more specialised, meaning it will be more reasonable for people to travel further for some services.

All this means there will not be an automatic need for a new general hospital when an area grows.

As Wychavon Town will take around 20 to 25 years to be fully built, plans for healthcare need to reflect this changing NHS model rather than how healthcare was delivered decades ago.

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB), which plans and pays for local NHS services, will ultimately decide which healthcare facilities are needed and when.

Our role is to ensure the right land, buildings and infrastructure are available to support the NHS's future vision for healthcare. The ICB remains a key partner in the Wychavon Town project and continues to help shape plans for future healthcare provision. Work to draw up a healthcare strategy for the new town is already underway.

# Understanding hormones

Wellbeing  
in WYCHAVON

**A woman left suicidal after her perimenopause symptoms were repeatedly misdiagnosed has helped inspire a new focus on supporting women's mental health through our Wellbeing in Wychavon programme.**

Sally became one of our volunteer peer mentors last year. Her experience highlighted the link between menopause and mental health, resulting in perimenopausal women becoming a priority group within the programme.

Research shows women experiencing perimenopause are more likely to experience depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts. In Worcestershire, although it is men who have the highest number of deaths by suicide, and numbers are much lower for women, there is a peak for women aged 45 to 49.

Sally's story shows why improving understanding of the link between menopause and mental health among the public and health professionals is so important.

Her story began in 2018 with anxiety, panic attacks and insomnia, which gradually took over her life. The menopause was never considered as a possible cause, and her condition worsened over several years, leading to multiple hospital admissions and suicide attempts.

The turning point came when Sally recognised her symptoms after watching a television documentary and was prescribed hormone replacement therapy. Within months, her mental health improved and she was able to rebuild her life.

Sally is now using her story to help others, including contributing to a book published by the Royal College of Psychiatrists to improve understanding of the link between hormones and mental health.

She also led our innovative '**Story of Hope**' workshop in April, which raised awareness of the issue amongst the community and health professionals.

Sally is now working with us on a follow-up event in October, which will focus on different aspects of how perimenopause and menopause impact mental health.

**"When I went on HRT, it was like someone had turned the light on. After all those years of being lost, suddenly there I was," Sally said.**

**"Everything that happened to me was completely preventable. If just one person had checked my hormone levels, things would have been very different.**

**"When I asked why hormones had never been considered, I was just dismissed. That's when I knew I had to tell my story. Things have to change."**

## Find out more

Our Wellbeing in Wychavon scheme supports people who naturally chat through their jobs or community roles to become champions of good mental health. Training covers spotting signs of poor mental health, active listening and directing people to support.

The scheme focuses on groups more at risk of poor mental health, including **lone-working rural men, new mums, carers, people with long-term conditions and perimenopausal women.**



Email [Hayley.corbett@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:Hayley.corbett@wychavon.gov.uk) to find out more.

BE *well* | THINK *well* | CONNECT *well*

# SCRAP

## fly-tipping

We've launched a new tool to help residents protect themselves from rogue waste carriers and support our fight against fly-tipping.



**WasteGuard**

Check. Choose. Dispose responsibly.

**WasteGuard helps residents find trusted local waste carriers who have been checked by our Community and Environmental Protection officers to ensure they hold a valid waste carrier licence and dispose of rubbish responsibly.**

There are currently three local companies signed up to the scheme, but we are approaching many more and hope to add additional approved carriers soon.

Many people don't realise they have a legal duty of care to make sure anyone taking away their waste is authorised to do so. If rubbish is dumped illegally and traced back to you, you could still face enforcement action. Whether you are clearing out a garage, getting

rid of garden waste or disposing of rubbish from home improvements, using a trusted carrier helps reduce the risk of fly-tipping and supports local businesses doing the right thing.

You do not have to use a company listed on WasteGuard to meet your legal duty of care when disposing of waste. However, you must show you have taken all reasonable steps to ensure your rubbish will be disposed of responsibly.

The best way to protect yourself is to follow the **SCRAP** code before handing over waste:

- S**uspect all waste carriers
- C**heck their waste carrier registration
- R**efuse unexpected offers to take waste away
- A**sk where your waste is going
- P**aperwork – make sure you get a receipt or waste transfer note

WasteGuard forms part of our "Who's taking your waste out?" campaign to reduce fly-tipping and encourage more responsible waste disposal across the district.



The campaign features a series of striking images showing people "dating" old sofas, mattresses and piles of rubbish to get across a simple message – you should know exactly who is taking your waste and what they plan to do with it.

The adverts encourage residents to think twice before accepting cheap or unexpected offers to remove rubbish and reinforce the importance of following the SCRAP code to avoid waste being fly-tipped.

**Visit our web page to find an approved waste carrier, check your responsibilities under the SCRAP code or apply to join WasteGuard.**

Let's **SCRAP** fly-tipping

# Backing business

A £1.74 million programme designed to support businesses, tourism, skills and investment is being rolled out across the district over the next two years.

Funded entirely by us, the programme builds on some of the work previously supported through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund but has been redesigned to better reflect the specific needs of the district.

The package includes grants and support for both rural and town based businesses, apprenticeship support, inward investment activity, tourism promotion and focused support for hospitality businesses. Some of these initiatives are featured in more detail across these pages.

Support will also continue for our Place Boards in Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore, helping deliver projects designed to increase footfall and support town centres.

Tourism remains a major focus, with the sector worth more than £190 million a year to the local economy. Over the next two years Wychavon will support around 40 strategic tourism events and continue promoting attractions and events across the district.



The new studio our Growth Grant helped fund at Watersedge in Bishampton.

## Growing Wychavon

**Tourism**

**Rural areas**

**Hospitality**

**Manufacturing**

Our Growth Fund supports businesses looking to expand create jobs or to do something new.

Grants of between £500 and £15,000 are available to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as Community Interest Companies, social enterprises and commercially active not-for-profit organisations based in the district.

Businesses across all sectors, including manufacturing, rural enterprises, hospitality, tourism and the wider business community, can apply. New start-ups will need to provide a business plan if they have been trading less than 12 months.

Applicants provide at least 50 per cent of the total funding for their project themselves.

Examples of eligible projects include investing in machinery to improve efficiency, supporting expansion into new markets or a farm diversification project, enhancing tourism and hospitality offers and improving accessibility at visitor attractions.

Staffing costs, general running costs, solar panels and debt repayments won't be funded.

[View the Wychavon Growth Fund eligibility criteria and find out how to apply.](#)





## Apprenticeships

**We believe apprenticeships are vital to help businesses fill skills gaps and create new career opportunities.**

We provide grants of up to £1,500 to help businesses in the district with the cost of taking on an apprentice. Bursaries of up to £500 are also available to help apprentices with the cost of travel, clothing and tools/equipment to help break down barriers to accessing work.

Hive Support Services in Whittington recently received six apprenticeship grants from our scheme. The company, which provides support services such as IT, HR and Marketing to businesses, has 19 apprentices across the company with plans to recruit more in the future.



Jess Howard, Head of Talent at Hive Support Services, said:

“Apprentices are a great return on investment, bringing fresh perspectives and ideas. Training can be tailored to any skills gaps in the business, creating a sustainable pipeline of talent.”

Alicia Adamson is one of the apprentices we are funding at Hive Support Services, and has used the opportunity to switch careers into HR.

“My apprenticeship has allowed me to learn so much more about my role, feel more confident in what I am doing by giving me that in-depth knowledge and I can earn a wage while I am learning.”

[Find out more about apprenticeships on our web page.](#)



## Licence *discount*

**We've slashed the cost of creating outdoor seating areas for cafés, coffee shops, pubs and restaurants.**

A 70 per cent discount is now available on pavement licences, applying to both new applications and renewals.

Pavement licences allow businesses selling food and drink to place tables and chairs on public footpaths outside their premises. They can also be used for other types of removable furniture, such as counters or stalls for selling food and drink outside, heaters, benches and other types of seating.

Placement of advertising hoarding or A-boards, or anything which cannot be removed from the footpath after closing time, is not covered by a pavement licence and requires separate consent.

Furniture placed without a licence, or left overnight, could be removed by licensing officers.

[Find out more about applying or renewing a licence on the Worcestershire Regulatory Services web page](#), or calling 01905 822799 or emailing [enquiries@worcesterservices.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@worcesterservices.gov.uk).





# Meet your *stars*



From running community groups and supporting neighbours to fundraising and volunteering, people across Wychavon are doing incredible things to help others. Our Community Stars scheme shines a spotlight on the unsung heroes making a difference where you live.



## *Matty Kenny*

Despite his young age, Matty has already made an impact in Droitwich Spa through his passion for cycling, active travel and community action.

Having been involved in supporting remembrance events and the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal from the age of five, he went on to help launch the Droitwich Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Group. He played a key role setting up the town's new Bike Bus and a free bike repair hub on the Westlands estate, helping residents with everything from safety checks to repairs.

Matty has also become involved in Droitwich Spa Youth Council and Worcestershire Youth Cabinet, using his voice to represent young people and campaign on issues including mental and physical wellbeing.

## *Margaret Ballard*

For more than 50 years Margaret Ballard has brought joy, encouragement and friendship to the community in Wychavon and further afield thanks to her love of music.

In 1969 at the age of 25 she started a ladies' choir in Inkberrow. It has developed continuously since then and now includes around 20 members aged from 15 to 80 and has become about far more than music. Members, who come to the weekly practices from up to 35 miles away, describe it as a place of friendship, support and encouragement where people can build confidence and feel part of something special.

Margaret still continues to inspire others through her passion, commitment and dedication to community life.



## Karen and Steve Bearcroft

Karen and Steve are familiar to many residents and dog walkers along the banks of the River Avon in Evesham, due to their dedication to protecting one of the town's most recognisable and much-loved symbols.

The pair patrol the riverbanks several times a day checking on the welfare of swans and river birds. They also clear discarded fishing line, dumped rubbish and other potential harms to wildlife, while closely monitoring cygnets during nesting season.

Rescuing swans or birds in distress is also part of Karen and Steve's work. They are extremely grateful for the continuous support of Vale Wildlife Hospital & Rehabilitation Centre who provide additional care and expertise when required.

## Katie Thorley

Katie has become an indispensable part of the Wychbold and Droitwich Baby Bank since volunteering when the project first launched.

Now a director of the community interest company, she gives up countless hours to help sort donations, organise storage and keep sessions running smoothly. Her commitment is such that she even plans holidays around baby bank sessions and regularly fills her car with donations to sort from home.

Katie's passion for supporting families through the cost-of-living crisis has also inspired others, including members of her own family, to volunteer.

Described by organisers as someone without whom "we would not be able to do what we do", Katie's dedication continues to make a huge difference to families across the area.



## Cheryl Peters

Described as a "dream to have in the community", Cheryl is always first in the queue to volunteer. Her long list of activities includes Public Rights of Way Warden, a key member of the Worcestershire Regiment Group, Norton Royal British Legion and volunteering in the coffee shop and bar at both the Parish Hall and Sergeants' Mess.

As chair of the Community Apiary Group, she was part of a team that helped grow it from a small idea into a successful self-sustaining charity involving volunteer beekeepers from across the community.

She also played a key role in securing funding, and the dedication by Princess Anne, for The Sentry statue and helping preserve the military heritage of the former Norton Barracks through information boards and historical displays.



Community  
Stars  
2026

**Do you know a star in  
your community?**

[Visit our web page to nominate  
your community star.](#)



# Splash *feedback*

Earlier this year, we opened Saltwich Splash in Lido Park, Droitwich Spa.

The £550,000 splash pad was relocated beside the tennis courts and features water sprays, arches, a tipper bucket, boulders and a water run designed to spark children's imagination.

It was the last of our three splash pads to be upgraded following improvements in Pershore and Evesham.

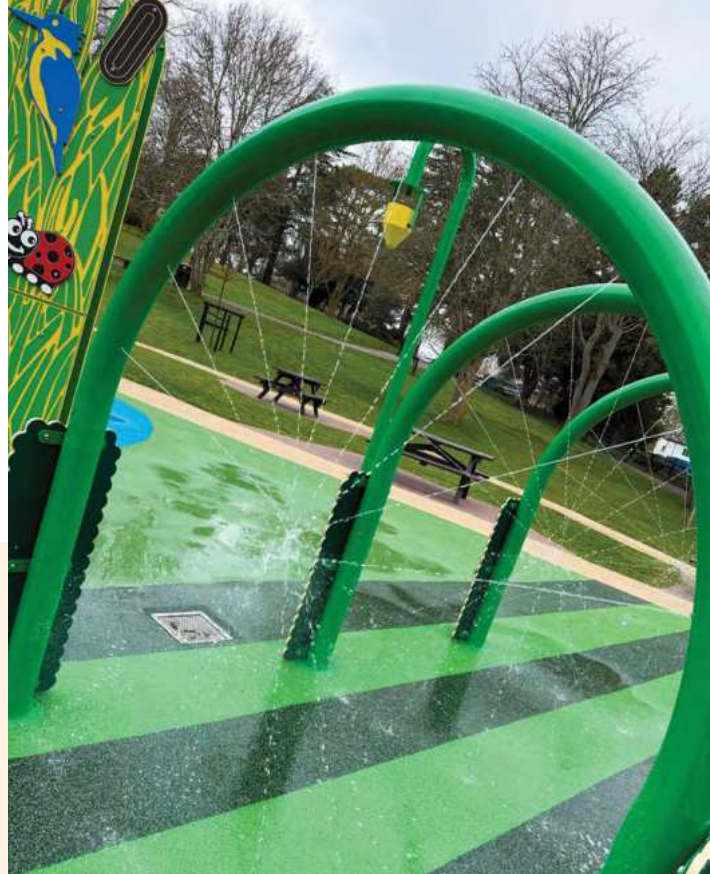
## Fencing consultation

While all three sites have proved hugely popular, some users have raised questions about whether fencing should be introduced.

The splash pads were originally designed without fencing so they felt part of the wider parks they sit within. However, we recognise some parents and carers would prefer a more enclosed space for their children and to help prevent dogs from entering the areas.

We will launch a public consultation in September to gather residents' views. This will allow enough time for work, should it be required, to be completed before the water plays open in 2027.

[Visit our parks web page to find out more and have your say.](#)



## Rolling *forward*

Work is well underway on a new skatepark and pump track in Droitwich Spa.

Both facilities are being created behind the town's leisure centre and have involved extensive input from the skating and riding community.

Designed by leading skatepark company Maverick, the skatepark will feature a modern street-style circuit suitable for all abilities, including quarterpipes, flatbanks and ledges.

The pump track will include a progressive loop for novice and intermediate bike and scooter users.

Both facilities will be free to use and are expected to open this autumn.

The £602,000 project forms part of our wider investment in leisure, health and wellbeing in Droitwich Spa, including the £15 million leisure centre upgrade, improvements to Droitwich Spa Lido and the health corridor completed last year.

Work on the leisure centre upgrade is due to finish in September and includes a new learner pool, café, refurbished changing rooms and major energy-efficiency improvements.



# Let's end homelessness together

We have launched an ambitious plan to end homelessness and rough sleeping across Wychavon.

Over the next five years, we will build on the work already underway to prevent more people from losing their homes and help people off the streets. Where homelessness cannot be avoided, we will ensure it is rare, brief and not repeated.

## *We have five* **key priorities:**

**1** Preventing homelessness by tackling the root causes and helping people stay in their homes.

**2** Improving temporary accommodation and support for those who need it.

**3** Providing targeted support for people most at risk.

**4** Acting early to stop housing problems becoming a crisis.

**5** Helping people rebuild their lives and avoid repeat homelessness.

There are several actions under each, with a strong focus on early intervention before homelessness happens. Enhanced support will be offered to key groups including children and young people, victims of domestic abuse, ex-prisoners, veterans and care leavers.

Increasing affordable housing, boosting the supply of good-quality temporary housing to reduce the use of unsuitable bed-and-breakfast accommodation and halving rough sleeping are also key aims.

Cllr Rick Deller, our Executive Board Member for Housing, Regulatory and Customer Services, said:

"This strategy builds on the fantastic work our team are already doing in this area to bring an end to homelessness and rough sleeping. But if we are serious about that ambition - and we are - then we have to tackle the root causes of both. That's why this new strategy puts so much emphasis on prevention and early intervention before people end up in crisis when our options to help are severely limited.

"But we cannot tackle this problem alone. The reasons people become homeless or end up on the streets are multiple and complex. The support of

our partners is vital if we are to make a real difference."

[Read our full plan to end homelessness and rough sleeping.](#)



## **Homelessness and rough sleeping -** *what's the difference?*

Rough sleeping is the most visible form of homelessness and refers to people sleeping outside. Most people only consider someone to be homeless if they are rough sleeping. But there are many different types, including people sofa surfing, living in temporary accommodation, fleeing domestic abuse or facing eviction with nowhere else to go. These types of homelessness make up the majority of demand on our housing service.

# Explore —&— Discover

**BE A TOURIST AT HOME  
THIS SUMMER**

## Looking for great days out this summer?

Beyond our towns, rural Wychavon is packed with hidden gems waiting to be discovered. Here's our brief guide to just some of them.

Discover everything the district has to offer on our website.



**Visit the Vale and Spa website**

**f @ValeandSpa**

**ig @valeandspa**

## History comes alive in Hartlebury

Step back in time at Hartlebury Castle, home to the Bishops of Worcester for 1,000 years. Explore grand state rooms, get closer to nature in the peaceful grounds and gardens and enjoy a packed programme of family-friendly events. Home to the County Museum, explore the history of Worcestershire through fascinating collections including toys, costume, archaeology and agriculture. Step back to Victorian times in the schoolroom and scullery, enjoy three centuries of fashion, and take a tour of the 1950s in the Lavish Living exhibition.

**Visit the Hartlebury Castle website.**

## Go wild in Honeybourne

All Things Wild offers a fun-filled family day out packed with amazing zoo animals, dinosaur encounters, exciting indoor and outdoor play areas, nature trails and hands-on experiences. There's plenty to keep children entertained whatever the weather.

**Visit the All Things Wild website.**

## Design and heritage in Broadway

Broadway boasts two fascinating museums. Broadway Museum & Art Gallery brings the village's history to life through interactive exhibitions, art collections and family activities, including a recreated 17th-century coaching inn. You can even try your hand at butter churning. The Gordon Russell Design Museum celebrates the story of one of Britain's most influential furniture designers through fascinating displays, furniture and archives.

**Visit the Broadway Museum website**

**Visit the Gordon Russell Museum website**

## Get arty in Conderton and Honeybourne

Watch beautiful ceramics being created by artist Toff Milway at Conderton Pottery, near Bredon Hill, or get creative yourself at Honeybourne Pottery with beginner-friendly workshops in wheel throwing, clay modelling and botanical casting.

**Visit the Conderton Pottery website.**

**Visit the Honeybourne Pottery website.**

## Get back to nature in Kemerton

Kemerton Lake Nature Reserve is one of Worcestershire's top wildlife sites. Home to otters, rare orchids, bats and more than 20 species of dragonflies and damselflies, the reserve offers peaceful walks through lakes, reed beds, woodland and grassland habitats.

**Visit the Kemerton Lake Nature Reserve website.**



## Enjoy a countryside day out in Dunhampton

A fun-packed family day out awaits at Little Owl Farm Park. Enjoy animal encounters, have a go at hands-on activities, take on the sledge run or attempt the commando course. You'll find something to keep all ages entertained.

🌐 [Visit Little Owl Farm Park's website.](#)

## Gorgeous gardens in Spetchley

Relax and unwind at the nationally renowned Spetchley Park Gardens, featuring 30 acres of spectacular formal, informal and woodland gardens. Alongside beautiful walks and a garden café, visitors can enjoy a packed programme of events including open-air theatre, talks and food markets.

🌐 [Visit Spetchley Gardens website](#)

## Relax and unwind in Bishampton

Reconnect with your wellbeing at lakeside wellness retreat Watersedge. Offering wild swimming, aerial yoga, saunas, spa experiences and peaceful countryside surroundings among other things, it's the perfect place to relax and recharge.

🌐 [Visit the Watersedge website](#)

## Take to the skies in Bickmarsh

Take to the skies with an introductory gliding experience at Bidford Gliding & Flying Club (despite the name, it's in the parish of Bickmarsh just inside Wychavon's border). Soar above the beautiful Vale of Evesham, enjoying breathtaking countryside views and the unforgettable thrill of silent flight.

🌐 [Visit Bidford Gliding and Flying Club website.](#)

## Unleash your adventurous side

Looking for adventure? From paddleboarding and kayaking to open water swimming and climbing activities, Wychavon's outdoor adventure centres are perfect for families, groups & thrill seekers alike.

🌐 [Visit Aztec Adventures website](#)

🌐 [Visit Lakeside Adventures website](#)

🌐 [Visit Lenches Lakes website](#)

## Walk with alpacas in the Vale and Flyford Flavell

Meet, walk and spend time with alpacas in the Worcestershire countryside. These unique experiences have become hugely popular and offer something a little different for animal lovers of all ages.

🌐 [Visit Simply Alpaca website](#)

🌐 [Visit Cotswold Vale Alpacas](#)

# Pedal power

A project encouraging more people to walk and cycle for everyday journeys has smashed its original targets after reaching more than 2,400 residents across Droitwich Spa and Evesham.

The Active Travel Community Engagement Scheme, run by the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust in partnership with us, delivered 63 activities between October 2025 and May 2026.

The programme focused on making active travel more accessible and helping people feel more confident walking and cycling for everyday journeys and leisure.

Highlights included more than 11,000 active journeys recorded by school children during the national Big Walk and Wheel competition, 159 bikes repaired and made safe and the launch of the new Westlands Cycle Repair Hub in Droitwich Spa.

Regular led walks, school sessions and events such as Droitwich Active

Wellbeing Week have also helped residents discover local routes and build confidence using them.

The next phase of the project is now underway and will expand activities into Pershore for the first time.

Plans include more monthly led walks, increased school engagement, workplace initiatives such as bike breakfasts and travel-planning support, summer holiday activities and a Christmas bike donation scheme to help more people access cycling.

The scheme is part of our wider work to encourage active travel and create places where people have more opportunities to travel sustainably and be active in their everyday lives.

As part of this, we have recently installed a new solar-powered Brompton Bike dock opposite Pershore Railway Station. The eight foldable bikes can be hired for £5 a day through the Brompton Hire app, giving commuters, residents and visitors a greener way to travel between the station and town centre.

[Find out how to hire a bike on the Brompton hire website.](#)



  
evesham  
VELOPARK



**Where the  
fun never  
takes a brake**

Visit [Evesham VeloPark website](#) to book.



**BOOK NOW**

# Renting *reform*

If you rent privately in Wychavon, you may already be aware of major changes to renting laws introduced in May.

The Renters' Rights Act gives tenants more security in their homes, while providing clearer rules and responsibilities for landlords.



## Here's what the new act means for renters, landlords and us.

### End of Section 21 'no fault' evictions

Landlords can no longer ask most tenants to leave without giving a legal reason. There are now 37 clear grounds landlords can use when giving notice. If a landlord evicts a tenant on the grounds they plan to sell or move into the property, they won't be able to re-let the property or advertise it for rent for 12 months.

### Rolling contracts

Fixed-term tenancies have been replaced with rolling agreements, allowing tenants to give two months' notice at any time.

### Anti-discrimination

Landlords can no longer refuse to let to people with children or who receive certain benefits.

### Rental bidding ban

It is now illegal to invite, encourage, or accept rental bids above the advertised price.

### Pet requests

Tenants have the right to request permission to have a pet. Landlords cannot turn down reasonable requests, but can still refuse on the grounds it would be unsuitable for the property.

### Rent in advance

Landlords can only ask for one month's rent in advance at the start of a tenancy. In return, tenants must now give two months' notice instead of one.

### Enforcement powers

Our private sector housing team now has the power to issue fines of between £3,000 and £40,000 for a range of offences and rent repayment orders have been strengthened.

### Changes to come

Next year, a national landlord database is set to be created, followed by a Private Rented Sector Landlord Ombudsmen in 2028.

*Know your rights*

## How to report housing issues

If you rent privately and are concerned about the condition of your home, problems with damp and mould, illegal eviction or harassment, please get in touch with our team at [privatesectorhousing@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:privatesectorhousing@wychavon.gov.uk).

If you live in social housing, please report issues to your housing provider.

[Find more housing support on our web page.](#)



# Boosting biodiversity



We're backing a transformative new plan to protect and restore nature across not just Wychavon, but the whole of Worcestershire.

The Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) sets out a long-term roadmap to reverse biodiversity loss, restore habitats and reconnect wildlife-rich spaces. It will also help shape how we deliver biodiversity improvements locally.

The strategy has been developed by councils, environmental organisations, landowners and community groups across the county.

It identifies the best opportunities to improve nature and create better-connected habitats for wildlife, from restoring rivers and wetlands to improving orchards, grasslands, woodlands and hedgerows.

But the strategy is not just about large-scale environmental projects. It also highlights the important role communities, businesses and residents can play in helping nature recover.

Every resident is being encouraged to commit to at least one action to support the plan. This could include creating wildlife-friendly gardens, planting trees and wildflowers, cutting holes in fences to create hedgehog highways or creating ponds.

Collectively, these actions can help tackle the decline in habitats and species while also delivering wider benefits, including cleaner air and water, healthier soils and better natural flood management.

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity already forms a major part of our Intelligently Green Plan, which sets out how we will contribute to tackling climate change and improving the natural environment up to 2030.

**[Find out more about the Local Nature Recovery Strategy on our website.](#)**

## *How we're supporting* **nature recovery**

-  Started work to **restore and improve 28 hectares of priority habitats** at Fish Hill, Broadway.
-  Worked with The Canal & River Trust to **restore 5.5 hectares of reed bed** at Coney Meadow, Droitwich Spa.
-  **Improved over 57 hectares of habitat** through our involvement in the Natural Networks programme.
-  **Planted more than 13,000 trees** across the district as part of the Trees Call to Action Project.
-  **Established and continue to develop Avon Meadows wetlands** in Pershore in partnership with Pershore Town Council and designated it as a local nature reserve.



## **Nature** *gains*

New developments in Wychavon are now legally required to leave nature in a better state than before building work started.

The rule, known as Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), came into force in February 2024 and require most developments to improve biodiversity overall by at least 10%.

Different habitats score different numbers of points, called biodiversity units, depending on factors such as size, condition, and importance to wildlife.

The biodiversity value of a site is calculated before and after work takes place. Developers must show how habitats have been retained, improved or created as part of the scheme. That could



# Natural networks

We're teaming up with Worcestershire Wildlife Trust to relaunch the Natural Networks grant scheme in Wychavon following the success of the previous countywide programme.

The scheme offers grants and expert advice to projects aiming to create or restore wildlife-rich habitats and improve biodiversity across the district. As part of the programme, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust will carry out biodiversity surveys and provide recommendations on how land can be enhanced to maximise benefits for wildlife.

Grants of up to £2,000 will be available to qualifying community groups and businesses. Up to 70% of project costs can be

funded through the scheme, with match funding required from organisations applying.

More details on how to apply will be released soon.

Sign up for our e-newsletter for the latest updates on this, and all our news.

include planting trees and hedgerows, creating wildflower meadows, restoring ponds or improving habitats for wildlife.

In some cases, environmental improvements can also be delivered elsewhere through funding for habitat restoration projects.

So far, 33 Biodiversity Gain Plans have been approved, showing the system is helping to deliver for wildlife in Wychavon.

For habitats such as grassland, woodland and open spaces, biodiversity scores increased by 13% overall. Hedgerow units rose by 46%, while river and stream units went up by 35%.



# Vaccine check



We're urging people of all ages to check they are up to date with their measles, mumps and rubella vaccinations (MMR) following a rise in measles cases.

Anyone who has missed a dose should contact their GP practice to arrange a vaccination appointment. Keeping vaccinations up to date is the best way to protect yourself and your family against future outbreaks.

The MMR vaccine is free, safe and highly effective. An MMR version without pork is also available through your GP practice.

**The West Midlands has seen a rise in measles cases over the past two years, with unvaccinated children under ten most affected.**



This has led to renewed concern from public health teams and the NHS. Worcestershire has also seen a recent rise in cases, including in adults. It is important people remember measles can affect both adults and children, and that some people can become very unwell.

Two doses of the MMR vaccine provide very high protection against measles, but public health experts

advise around 95% uptake is needed to prevent outbreaks spreading within communities.

Worcestershire performs better than many areas of England, with more than 90% of children receiving both doses by age five. However, vaccination rates can differ within our communities, and this is a good time to get yourself and your family vaccinated.

Measles is one of the most infectious diseases in the world. Analysis shows one infected child in a classroom can infect up to nine other unvaccinated children, while one in five children who catch measles will need hospital treatment.

Symptoms start like a cold with a runny nose, cough, sore red eyes and a fever before a distinctive red-brown rash appears a few days later, usually starting on the face and then spreading across the body.

While many people recover fully from measles, complications can include chest infections, dehydration and, in rare cases, meningitis, brain inflammation and death.

Through the Wychavon District Health Collaborative, we're working with local GPs to raise awareness and encourage take-up of all vaccines. Pershore and

Protecting  
**children,**  
protecting  
**communities**



Upton Primary Care Network (PCN) is one of the GP groups increasing appointment availability, including Saturdays, to make it easier for people to get protected.

Dr Peter Evans, from Pershore and Upton PCN, said:

"Although vaccination rates in our area are higher than elsewhere in the region, they are on the decline, which is a cause for concern. Measles can be serious, life-changing, and, in some cases, deadly, despite being easily preventable through vaccination. We urge parents and carers to check their children are fully up to date with their MMR jabs and any other routine vaccinations and book any catch-up doses with their GP as soon as possible."

Wychavon District Health Collaborative was founded in 2022 to bring together local organisations, including GPs, us, and charities, to embed health and wellbeing into everyday community life.

# Unfair sanction

We are challenging a government planning sanction which could allow decisions on major developments to be taken out of the hands of locally elected councillors.

The Government has designated Wychavon under Section 62A of the Town and Country Planning Act because, during the two-year assessment period between April 2023 and March 2025, 12 out of 112 major planning decisions made by us were overturned on appeal by the Planning Inspectorate. This resulted in a designation rate of 10.7%, slightly above the Government's threshold of 10%.

The designation means developers submitting certain major planning applications can choose to apply directly to the Planning Inspectorate, which would make decisions on our behalf.

We strongly dispute the decision and are considering all options available to challenge it, including legal action. The decision is based on historic data and fails to recognise the significant improvements made to our planning service over the last two years.

Following a major restructure, current performance is now well below the Government's designation threshold. Our planning team has been recognised by the Royal Town Planning Institute as West Midlands Planning Team of the Year and shortlisted for multiple national awards.

The timing of the decision is particularly frustrating as it comes just weeks after the adoption of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR).

The SWDPR will guide growth across South Worcestershire until 2041 and allocates land for more than 25,000 homes, including Wychavon Town. It also strengthens our ability to resist speculative development by ensuring new homes are delivered in the right places with the roads, schools, healthcare facilities and community infrastructure needed to support them.

Our concern is the Government's designation could undermine some of the benefits of adopting the SWDPR.

Cllr Emma Kearsey, our Executive Board Member for Planning, Infrastructure and Urban Design, said: "How dare they! This is an outrageous decision by a government that thinks it can simply dictate to local communities in complete defiance of the evidence and common sense.

"We have no problem with accountability. We do have an issue with a decision based on historic data that ignores the reality of the planning service we have today.

"We will challenge this affront to local democracy and fight to return decisions on major planning applications to democratically elected councillors as soon as possible."



## Beautiful design

We're setting higher standards for development across the district following the adoption of the Wychavon Design Code.

The code sets clear expectations for developers designing new housing schemes, ensuring proposals reflect the district's distinctive character and fit well with existing communities and landscapes.

It also promotes sustainability, climate resilience, walkable neighbourhoods and the protection of important views.

Detailed standards covering areas such as street layout, landscaping, drainage, parking, public spaces and building materials are included in the document.

Planning applications for ten or more homes will need to show how they meet the code. It will also help shape major projects such as Wychavon Town to ensure high-quality design is built in from the start.

[Read the Wychavon Design Code](#)



# Mast *campaign*

We are attempting to gain national recognition – and protection – for one of the district’s best-known landmarks.

Droitwich Transmitter Station – known locally as The Wychbold masts – is not only an iconic part of the area’s landscape, but a key part of British history due to the role it played during the Second World War.

But with the BBC bringing to an end more than 90 years of long-wave broadcasting last month (June), questions are now being asked about the masts’ future.

We previously attempted to have the masts nationally listed, meaning they could not be removed or altered without consent. Historic England rejected our bid, claiming the masts did not merit listing as they were not ‘innovative or influential’. An appeal to the Government was also turned down.



Our former Chairman Cllr Robert Raphael on a visit to the masts during our 50th anniversary tour.

We have now submitted an application to have the masts scheduled by Historic England instead, meaning they would become a nationally important scheduled monument. This would also mean alterations or removal could not be carried out without consent. We believe we may have a stronger case to schedule them as the criteria considers historical value and national importance, while listing requires architectural significance.

When the masts were built in 1934, they were the second-tallest in the UK, with each one 700ft tall. They are believed to be the oldest surviving telecommunications structures of their kind.

Cllr Rick Deller, who represents Wychbold, said:

“These masts are more than an iconic part of our skyline – they are a nationally significant reminder of the role Worcestershire played to help free Europe from Nazi tyranny.

“We are seeking clarification about their future while doing everything we can to secure the recognition and protection they deserve.”



## Why are the masts so important?

The Wychbold masts were a crucial part of Britain’s successful effort to defeat Nazi Germany. They were not only used as a jamming device to disrupt enemy transmissions to Luftwaffe aircraft approaching Britain, but also broadcast wartime news in Morse code to resistance and underground groups in occupied countries.

Most significantly, on the night of 5 June 1944 – the day before the D-Day landings - they sent the coded message that the Allies were on their way. This spurred resistance groups across France into a spate of distraction attacks on rail networks, communications systems and supply lines to the Normandy beaches, as well as assaults on German military.

The masts also issued orders to troops involved in Operation Dingson, a special forces mission to establish a foothold in Brittany, to create drop zones and potential landing areas for Allied troops and supplies.

# Distinctive welcome

If you are a Pershore resident or visitor to the town, you will hopefully have noticed a colourful new addition to the landscape.

A new set of welcome signs celebrating Pershore's character, heritage, and natural beauty has been installed at key entrances to the town.

Each sign features an image reflecting one of Pershore's most recognisable and best-loved assets, including Pershore Abbey, the town's historic bridges, the River Avon, Avon Meadows, Pershore's famous plums and blossom, and a striking kingfisher.

The signs were the brainchild of our Pershore Place Board, who wanted to create a more distinctive welcome for visitors, while strengthening local pride.

We funded the project through our share of the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund, with support from Worcestershire County Council's highways team.



## Boardwalk upgrade

Work has started on a £225,000 project to replace the boardwalk at Avon Meadows in Pershore and improve access for residents and visitors.



The original boardwalk was made from recycled plastic but was closed last year on safety grounds after being damaged by flooding and the extreme heat experienced in recent years.

It will be replaced with a more robust timber-and-steel design that better withstands flooding and other extreme weather events. The new boardwalk will be wider than the previous structure, making it easier for people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters, pushchairs and prams to enjoy the wetlands.

Access gates around the site will also be upgraded to further improve accessibility. As the ground is very wet or underwater for parts of the year, work may need to be carried out in stages if it cannot be completed within the next couple of months.

Once completed, the new boardwalk will not only restore access for visitors to the wetlands and wildlife watching areas, but also part of an important 'green' walking route between the town centre, nearby housing developments, Pershore High School, the railway station and employment sites.



# Energy support

With energy prices expected to rise again, support is available to help households cut heating costs and improve energy efficiency.

## Warm Homes: Local Grant Scheme



Qualifying households could get fully funded improvements, including insulation, upgraded heating systems, heat pumps, solar panels and energy-efficient windows and doors.

Worcestershire County Council is delivering the scheme on our behalf through local energy charity Act on Energy.

Visit the [Worcestershire Warm Homes: Local Grant scheme web page](#) or call 0800 988 2881 to speak to an Act on Energy adviser.

## Oil and LPG Energy Support Scheme



Low-income households relying on heating oil or Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) can get a one-off support payment of £300 through the Government's Crisis and Resilience Fund.

Visit the [Act on Energy website](#) for the full qualifying criteria or call them using the number elsewhere on this page.

## The Boiler Upgrade Scheme



Get grants of between £5,000 and £7,500 towards the cost of replacing your boiler with a heat pump or biomass boiler.

Visit the [Government's website](#) to find out more about the boiler upgrade scheme.



## » Help with your energy bills

If you are struggling with energy bills, contact your supplier as they may offer hardship support.

**Act on Energy** can also provide free advice on grants, debt and energy efficiency support. Call them using the number elsewhere on this page or [visit the Act on Energy website](#).

## » Cost of living support

[Free confidential cost-of-living advice](#) is available through the [Worcestershire Advice Network](#)

# Waste *changes*

Waste and recycling collections, along with street cleaning, will be delivered directly by us for the first time in decades, as part of preparations for changes to local councils.

Councillors have agreed to move the services 'in-house' once the current contract with FCC Environment ends on 31 March 2028. This is the day before we are set to be abolished under Local Government Reorganisation and replaced by either a South Worcestershire Unitary Council or a single unitary council for Worcestershire.

It is believed beginning a new contract, potentially with a new contractor, on the same day as the biggest change to local government in more than 50 years would pose a risk to the delivery and quality of the service to residents.

Extending the existing contract is not an option.

All the other district councils being abolished within Worcestershire already operate their own waste and recycling services. If we started a new long-term contract with an external provider, it could tie the hands of the new unitary council, making it more difficult to achieve efficiency savings and improve the service.

It will also be easier to deliver food waste collections across the county, while offering greater flexibility to change service standards and

priorities to reflect the council's ambitions, rather than being tied to contractual obligations. From mid-2027, the 'shadow authority' for the new unitary council being created will also have to sign off any significant additional expenditure and there is no guarantee a new waste contract would be agreed.

An independent assessment of continuing to use an external contractor or an in-house service found there was no significant saving for either option.



## Sixways *tribute*



**The name Wychavon now has pride of place at the home of Worcester Warriors.**

Executive Chairman Christopher Holland has renamed the bar in the executive suite in recognition of our support for bringing elite-level rugby back to Sixways Stadium.

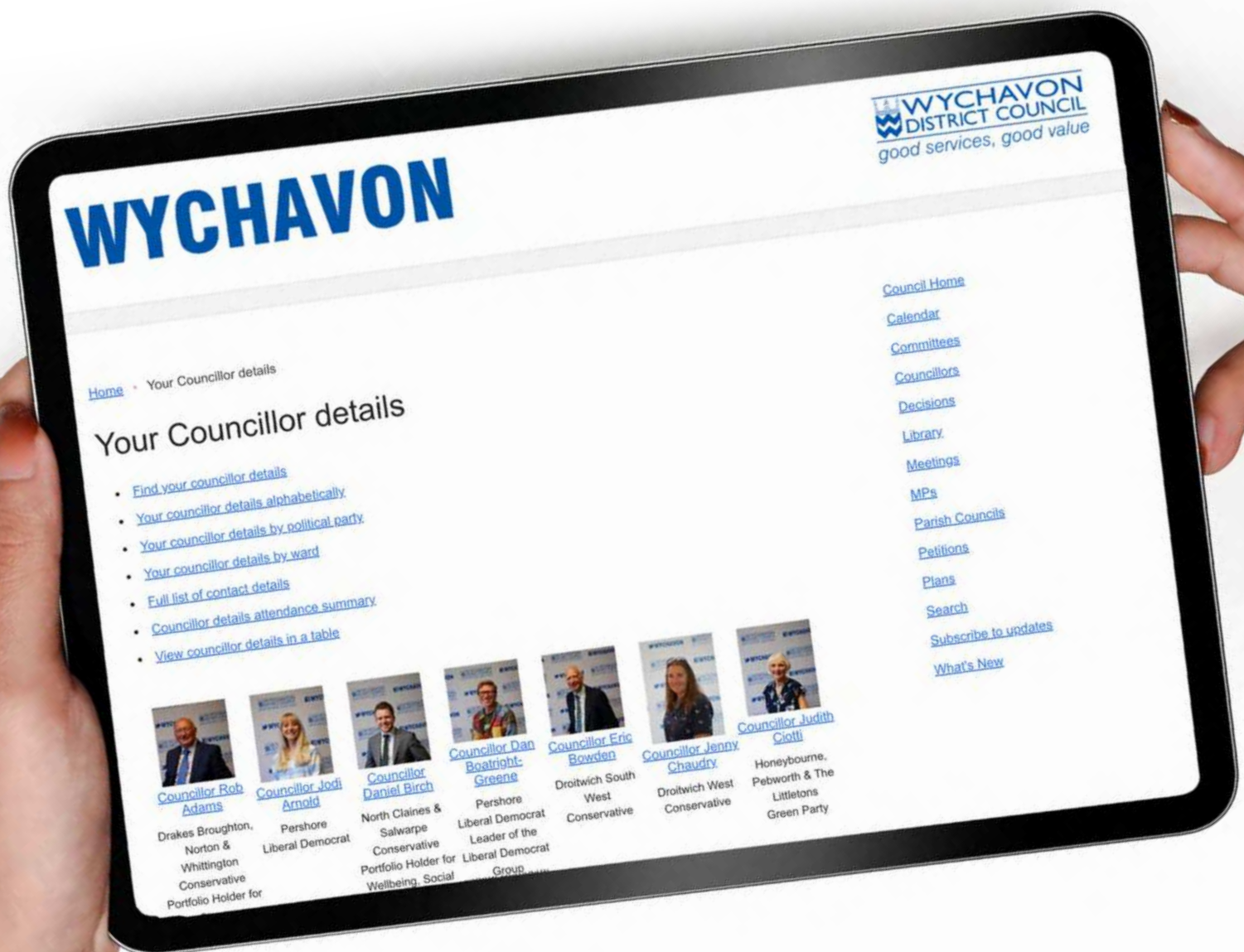
It is also a nod to the fact the club sits within Wychavon district and will ensure the name lives on after Local Government Reorganisation in 2028, when Wychavon as a council and a district will no longer exist.

# WYCHAVON

## Councillors

2023-2027

For more information on your local councillors visit our [councillor details page \(opens in new window\)](#)



If you require this magazine in a different format please email [communications@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:communications@wychavon.gov.uk)

WYCHAVON is produced and published by Wychavon District Council. All information correct at time of going to print.