

Your Worcestershire

A MAGAZINE FOR PEOPLE WHO CALL OUR COUNTY THEIR HOME

SPRING 2025

LOCAL CHILDREN URGENTLY IN NEED OF LOVING FOSTER FAMILIES

Packed with stories and
features about your county

This edition features

- Investing in roads, pavements and digital connectivity
- “Game changing” Healthy Worcestershire
- Our foster carers answer the most frequently asked questions
- What’s on this Spring/Summer

worcestershire.gov.uk

Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster



produced by





Welcome to Your Worcestershire

Without doubt, this last year has been one of the most challenging I've seen in my 25 years in local government. We, along with most other county councils, are facing the pressure of more people needing the essential services we have to provide and the cost of those services are rising significantly. The key areas which this affects are adult and children's social care, home to school travel and SEND provision, which collectively accounts for over 70 per cent of our spend.

This is leading to significant financial pressures which many authorities are grappling with across the country. Despite this, we will still have one of the lowest Council Tax of any county council in the country, providing value for your money.

Just before Christmas, we were informed of the Government's plans to merge county and district councils within a relatively short timescale, therefore plans to make this change will need to be developed swiftly. In the meantime, we will continue to support the most vulnerable people in our communities, provide essential services for our residents and businesses, while delivering our plan to improve Worcestershire.

Despite the challenges we face and the level of change on the horizon, I continue to be enormously proud of the work we do as a county council, along with our partners, to make a difference to people's lives every single day. I'm sure you'll agree that our county remains a great place to work, live and visit.

Simon Geraghty

Leader of Worcestershire County Council

CONTENTS

- Serving Worcestershire 3
- Investing in transport, travel and digital connectivity 4
- Better roads and pavements..... 5
- Buses when and where you need them: Worcestershire on Demand 6
- Enhancing public transport 7
- Healthy Worcestershire 8
- More ways to get active 9
- Adult Social Care: paying for your care.....10
- Digital switchover11
- Local children urgently in need of loving foster families12
- Fostering questions and answers13
- Flooding focus14
- Country parks and public rights of way15
- What's on in Worcestershire 202516
- Who does what in Worcestershire?18
- Where to go for help and support19
- Skills and employability.....20
- Business support in Worcestershire.....21
- Libraries Unlocked.....22
- Help with childcare costs23

SERVING WORCESTERSHIRE

Worcestershire County Council plays an important role in providing vital services across the whole county. These include maintaining roads and pavements, providing support for our most vulnerable people through adult and children's social care, disposing of household waste, in addition to many more services.

The county council is run by 57 elected councillors who are responsible for making sure the services that the council provides meet the needs of residents and those who work in the county. The Cabinet is responsible for setting the direction of the council and is subject to scrutiny in all it does.

The council's Plan for Worcestershire is set out in its Corporate Plan, which was launched back in 2022. The plan focuses on four key priorities:



Championing...
Open for Business



Supporting...
Children and Families



Protecting...
The Environment



Promoting...
Health and Wellbeing

To find out who your local councillor is, and more about how the council is run, you can visit our web pages where you'll find all of the below information and much more:

worcestershire.gov.uk/your-councillors

Cabinet Members

The Cabinet is responsible for most day-to-day Council decisions.

Your Councillors

Find out who your Local Councillor is.

How the council is run

The County Council is run by elected Councillors.

Council, Cabinet and Committee Meetings

Find out when the next meeting is taking place and view agendas and minutes.

Overview and Scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny is a County Council function which ensures that you receive the best possible services from the Council and its partners.

The Council's Chairman And Vice-Chairman

Information on the Council's Chairman And Vice-Chairman

Get involved in Council matters

Find out how you can get involved, attend and participate in meetings.

Electoral Divisions

Find your electoral division and who your local Councillor is.

District Councils

Find out contact details for your local Council.

Information about how the Council is run and funded

INVESTING IN TRANSPORT, TRAVEL

AND DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

The completed new Kepax Bridge.

Kepax Bridge in Worcester

Worcestershire celebrated a milestone in December 2024, as the ribbon was cut to officially open Kepax Bridge in Worcester. Since the opening, the bridge has been very well used and has helped encourage healthier, more sustainable travel options for residents, visitors, and students to cross the city.

The bridge runs from Gheluvelt Park to the east of the river, across to the Henwick Park area of St John's, to the west. It is a welcome addition to the popular riverside route, complementing the Diglis Bridge in the south and the Sabrina Bridge near the city centre.

For more information, visit: worcestershire.gov.uk/kepaxbridge

Hampton pedestrian and cycling bridge in Evesham

Plans are moving forward for the Hampton pedestrian and cycling bridge.

A new toucan crossing on Pershore Road, Evesham, is already improving connectivity for those on foot, wheeling or cycling, providing a safer link between Hampton and Evesham town centre.

Planning approval for the bridge was granted in May 2024, and final designs and funding are now in place for the scheme with construction expected to start later this year.

The scheme will create a sustainable, safe and flood resilient route between Hampton and Evesham, and enhance access to Evesham's riverside meadows.

Stay updated as we progress towards construction by visiting: worcestershire.gov.uk/hampton

Have your say on mobile connectivity in Worcestershire!

Is your mobile signal letting you down? Over 800 residents so far have said that theirs is! We need more feedback from you, especially if you run a business, to make sure we have as much information as possible to go back to Ofcom. Ofcom's data suggests strong outdoor coverage, however the feedback we have received so far is telling us that many people face disruptions to calls, maps, shopping and much more, indicating a decline in service over the last year.

We're collaborating with mobile operators to address problem areas, and your input is vital. Share your experiences by taking our short survey to help us target improvements where they're needed most. Together, we can achieve better coverage.

Take our mobile connectivity short survey



BETTER ROADS AND PAVEMENTS

Travelling along good roads and well-maintained pavements may seem ordinary, however, it's the result of a lot of effort behind the scenes (and a lot of investment!).

It's with this continued hard work and investment that the condition of our network remains one of the best in the country. As the Highway Authority, we're responsible for **maintaining over 4,000km of roads across the county.**

Our three-year commitment to excellence

Our commitment to enhancing roads and pavements delivered results in 2024:

- **Pavement improvements:** approximately 275 improvement schemes were completed, transforming over 75km of footways.
- **Road resurfacing:** more than 180 resurfacing projects were delivered, resulting in over 40km of newly resurfaced roads.

These initiatives are not just numbers; they're about creating smoother journeys for residents and visitors alike.

Looking ahead

Maintaining and enhancing our road and pavement network is a relentless job but one we take very seriously. We know it's a big priority for our residents which is why it's a big priority for us. With continued investment and new ways of doing things, we're not just improving infrastructure, we're building a better and more connected future for everyone in the county.

Preserving our roads for the long haul

Surface dressing plays a crucial role in our annual road maintenance programme. The process of replacing the top layer of road enhances skid resistance and seals the road surface, protecting it from water damage and helping to prevent potholes. It's a cost-effective method that makes the life of our roads much longer.

In 2024, we invested around £4 million into surface dressing, completing work at 167 sites and treating 190km of carriageways. This initiative ensures that our roads remain durable and safe for years to come.

The future is bright!

Thanks to big investment, 99 per cent of our streetlights have been upgraded to energy-efficient LED technology. The benefits have been huge:

- **Energy use reduction:** a 21 per cent decrease in energy consumption compared to the previous year.
- **Lower carbon emissions:** a 16 per cent reduction in carbon emissions.

These improvements underscore our commitment to sustainability while also cutting costs for the future.



BUSES WHEN AND WHERE YOU NEED THEM:

WORCESTERSHIRE ON DEMAND

The Worcestershire on Demand bus services continue to be a great success, offering a flexible, affordable service and sustainable form of public transport in Bromsgrove and Malvern Hills.

Both areas have also recently been extended further to cover more locations, with further expansion into most areas of the county set to go live later this year.

In total, nearly 100,000 trips across Bromsgrove and Malvern Hills have been made since launch. The service has an average customer satisfaction rating of 4.8 out of 5.

Buses run from 7am-7pm, Monday to Saturday. **There's a flat fare of £2.50 per person, per journey. If you book for more than one person, additional passengers on your booking pay £1.25 per person, per journey. Concessionary cards are accepted.** Ticket bundles are also available for frequent users. Veterans can use the service free of charge.

How to book a journey:

- Download the Worcestershire on Demand app from your usual app store (Apple App Store or Google Play Store).
- Allow the app to access your location.
- Set where you'd like to travel to and from.
- Pick the date and time you'd like to travel.
- Set how many passengers.

The app will then show you the ride options that are available and the pick-up location, you can then reserve the ride. There will then be an option to make it a return trip.

If you, or someone you know, would like support with using the app please call **01905 846180**, or please visit your local library where the team can help.



WORCESTERSHIRE
ON DEMAND

Find out more about
Worcestershire on Demand



ENHANCING PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Bus service

Big improvements have been made to bus travel across the county this year, with a number of bus service enhancements going live in January 2025.

Worcestershire County Council, alongside providers First Bus and Diamond Bus, have brought in changes to services that are the biggest improvements for those travelling by bus in the past 10 years.

Improvements to the services include increased service frequency, new peak time buses, new Sunday services and later evening buses on many routes across the county.

The improvements are all part of the Bus Service Improvement Plan, which aims to further improve bus provision in the county, focusing on more frequent, reliable and punctual bus services.

To find out which services have been enhanced, visit: [worcestershire.gov.uk/bus-timetables-and-journey-planning](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/bus-timetables-and-journey-planning).

Worcestershire's rail plans on track

Exciting plans are underway across Worcestershire's rail network, bringing better connectivity and accessibility for residents and visitors.

Worcestershire Parkway, opened in 2020, continues to beat expectations, with over 500,000 trips recorded in 2023/24. This is more than the estimated figures in the year 2031 of 383,400 trips! Work is ongoing to increase CrossCountry services, improving links between the South West and North of England.

Regionally, the Government-funded **Midlands Rail Hub** will boost East-West connectivity and reduce congestion at Birmingham New Street. For Worcestershire, this will add additional Worcester-to-Birmingham services, with ongoing talks to secure more investment to extend services to Hereford.

Upgrading the **North Cotswold Line**, which is the line between Oxford and Worcestershire, is another rail improvement we continue to talk to Government about funding for. Improving this part of the line will mean more trains to and from London and those trains will be quicker, more reliable and offer wider connectivity to Oxford, the South East and Heathrow.

Locally, the **Worcestershire Community Rail Partnership** promotes rail travel through a range of projects including station adoption schemes, walking routes, and art projects such as the new Worcester Foregate Street mural. Educational projects with rail charity, Platform, encourage safe and sustainable rail use among schoolchildren.

Find out more about Worcestershire's Rail Investment Strategy here: [worcestershire.gov.uk/wris](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/wris)



Prof. Chris Whitty at Healthy Worcestershire in Perdiswell.

HEALTHY WORCESTERSHIRE

What people are saying about Healthy Worcestershire

“

I enjoyed the memory exercises. As you get older or if you suffer from stress, anxiety or depression, the memory exercises are very helpful. I would recommend these sessions to anybody who has low esteem, who doesn't get out and is in need of meeting people.

— Gill from Abbeydale

”

“

I always struggled with arthritis, I am now able to get up and sit down with no pain as a result of the exercises. I am going to continue with the exercises over the next few weeks.

— Jane from Evesham

”

“

I have gained a lot of self-confidence, meeting other people has helped me a lot. The exercises have helped me with my shoulder injury too! Definitely give it a go! Don't just give it one week, give it a few weeks.

— Martin from Sandycroft

”

Looking to improve your health and wellbeing?

Healthy Worcestershire are local health and wellbeing sessions, that are all about feeling good and connecting with others.

You can take part in gentle exercises like strength and balance, hear helpful health tips, and get advice on staying safe in your community. There's also plenty of chance to discover other local activities, have a chat, make friends, and enjoy some quality time with others.

New member, Astrid, had a very positive experience with the programme, describing it as a “game changer”.

She said: “I joined Healthy Worcestershire to do the exercises and to socialise. I've never really exercised before so didn't really think it was for me. But having got in here and doing it, it's been really good. I've really felt better, my flexibility and my socialising have never been better. The trainer makes exercise easy as they don't make it into a task and he allows you to do exactly what you want, when you want.”

It's a game changer really because it's so good.”

Throughout the last 12 months, the programme has steadily grown with new session venues being announced every few months.

In October, Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England, visited Healthy Worcestershire in Perdiswell, Worcester, and was impressed by the programme. “It was great to see some of the work in action at Healthy Worcestershire, which was clearly very well run and appreciated by the people there,” he said.

New sessions are starting all over Worcestershire. Find your nearest one here worcestershire.gov.uk/HealthyWorcestershire



WYTHALL & HOLLYWOOD FUN RUN



MORE WAYS TO GET ACTIVE

Looking for other ways to improve your physical activity?

Have you tried Park Yoga in Kidderminster or if running is your thing, sign up for the Wythall and Hollywood Fun Run on Sunday 22 June 2025.

Using resistance bands is an effective way to build and maintain muscle strength, which is essential for staying active and healthy. Adults over 50 typically lose around one per cent of muscle mass per year without regular exercise. Incorporating resistance band exercises into your routine can help maintain your strength and support your overall wellbeing. If you are over 50, pick up your free resistance band and exercise guide from any library in Worcestershire.

For more information visit: worcestershire.gov.uk/GetActive



CAREERS WORCS



DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE AGED 16-24 THAT NEEDS FREE JOB, EDUCATION, SKILLS, TRAINING OR WELLBEING ADVICE?

VISIT OUR CAREER WORCS HUBS INSIDE...

Visit Careers Worcestershire

THE HIVE
(Worcester City)

THE POINT
KIDDERMINSTER
COLLEGE
(Kidderminster)

HoW COLLEGE
(Redditch)

PARKSIDE MARKET ST.
(Bromsgrove)

careersworcs.co.uk

0300 666 3 666 Mon-Fri 9AM-4PM



ADULT SOCIAL CARE: PAYING FOR YOUR CARE

Is someone you know struggling to manage at home on their own? Are you worried about how you will be able to support them? We are here to help.

A package of care could help keep your loved one independent for longer. You can get a wealth of information about what services are available and access social care support via our Adult Front Door.

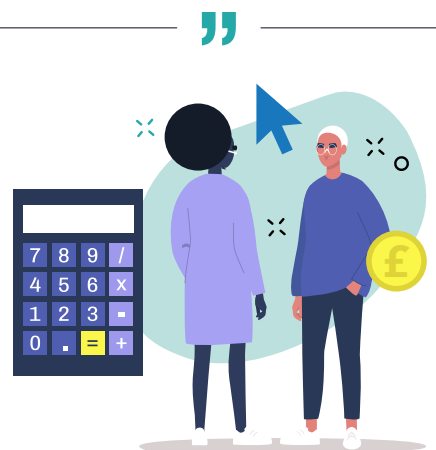
We are here to help you navigate the financial side when making the difficult decision to seek care for yourself or your loved ones.

We understand this is an emotional time and we want you to know we are here and that we care.

You can complete our simple Financial Assessment which will allow us to help you determine how much the care will cost and what support you are entitled to.

Adult Social Care is not free, but if your savings are below £23,250 help from the council may be available.

“
The Client Contribution Assessment Team at Worcestershire County Council have been immensely helpful in supporting us through the emotional and taxing journey of sourcing and paying for care for our son – THANK YOU!
— a local resident



Calculate your care costs online

Did you know we have a free online Contribution Calculator that gives you an estimated figure of how much you may have to pay towards your care?

You can do this at home for free without putting in any personal details or sending the form to us.

The calculator does not store any of the information you enter, and you can use it as many times as you need.

All you need to do is enter details of your benefits, pensions, earnings, savings, assets, and costs. The calculator will then estimate the amount that you might have to pay each week.

It is the quickest and simplest way to begin your Financial Assessment, but can also be useful for just putting your mind at rest by estimating the costs.

Find out more about paying for care

Your gateway to Adult Social Care: through the Adult Front Door



If you are looking for support with everyday tasks, contact the Adult Front Door, for early advice, information and signposting. It's the front door for people over 18 to access local support and if needed, Adult Social Care.

There are lots of ways to access the Adult Front Door.

Get in touch securely through our online portal at: [worcestershire.gov.uk/MakeAReferral](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/MakeAReferral)

Our specialist advisors will contact you to discuss which services best suit your needs.

If you prefer, book a telephone call and an advisor will call you back at a time convenient to you and your family, to have a conversation with you about your support needs.

[worcestershire.gov.uk/BookAnAppointment](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/BookAnAppointment)

If you are unable to get online you can contact a member of our team directly on **01905 768053** who will help you to book an appointment.

The Adult Front Door's opening hours are **Monday to Thursday, 9am-5pm;** and **Friday, 9am-4.30pm.**

DIGITAL SWITCHOVER

Up until January 2027, Openreach are removing ALL old analogue telephone lines used by most old telephone services. The result will be a fully digital network across the UK. Most telephone providers will be moving their customers to a new upgraded digital landline using a digital service, such as fibre.

How will it affect me and what do I need to do?

This will affect everyone who is still using the older, analogue type of phones in their home or business. This may be for voice calls or other analogue line services such as fax or alarm lines. Your telecoms provider will contact you before the switchover to discuss what you need to do to make sure your service isn't interrupted.



SKILLS FOR LIFE

SKILLS BOOTCAMPS WORCESTERSHIRE

Why should you do a free Skills Bootcamp?

Skills Bootcamps are **free**, short, hands-on courses for **anyone** aged 19+ that lives or works in Worcestershire.

They are designed to help people upskill, reskill or give people the chance to gain new skills in a variety of industry sectors!

They can be **completed in just a few weeks**, they won't affect any benefit claims and, once completed, they can lead to a **guaranteed interview** with a Worcestershire employer!

Worcestershire Skills Bootcamps include...

Construction | Nursing | Digital | Marketing | Early Years |
Lean Manufacturing | Leadership & Management |
Data Analyst | Construction Project Management | Welding |
Retrofit Green Skills | Manufacturing Practices |
Health & Social Care | Cyber Security | Warehouse |
Software Development | Childcare *and more!*

Find out more about
Worcestershire Skills Bootcamps

For more information or to book a Bootcamp place, call 0300 666 3 666 or go online

careersworcs.co.uk/skillsbootcamps



You may be eligible to apply for a Skills Bootcamp if you are: aged 19+, live in England, have the right to work in the UK & meet residency requirements. Participation in a Skills Bootcamp does not affect benefit claims. Some Skills Bootcamps have additional eligibility criteria; contact training provider for more details. Skills Bootcamps are subject to availability & may be withdrawn/postponed based on uptake. Please contact training providers or 0300 6663666 for more details.



LOCAL CHILDREN URGENTLY IN NEED OF LOVING FOSTER FAMILIES

The shortage of fostering families is a national crisis, and we are seeing more and more children coming in to care who need a stable and loving home.

There are lots of different types of foster care that you can do: long term, short term, buddy and specialist. Not all are full time, our buddy scheme asks that you care for a child one weekend a month and one week in the summer holidays. You can still work alongside caring for a child too.

“

We couldn't have birth children, but we knew we wanted to give love and stability to less fortunate children. We had a lot of love to give and no one to give it to. We've now adopted one of your foster babies and continue to foster.

”

“

I know it sounds really cheesy, but it was to make a difference. I have two birth children and fostering allows me to be available for all the children in my family. I'm here when he comes home from school. It's my life.

”

What you do with your life could forever change someone else's.

Find out more about fostering on our website: worcestershire.gov.uk/fostering or give us a call: 0800 028 2158

Find out more about
Worcestershire Fostering

FOSTERING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Our foster carers regularly join us at our information evenings and pop-up events to talk about fostering.

We thought sharing the answers to the questions they get asked most often, may help you to decide if fostering could change your life, and a child or young person's, for the better, forever:

Do you need a spare room?

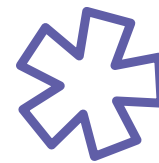
“ We didn't when we started the process, but we had a loft conversion done thinking we could have a lodger if fostering didn't work out. For looking after children and babies under 2, you don't need a spare room as they can be in a cot in your bedroom. ”

I couldn't give them back; I'd get too attached – how do you do it?

“ Our job as foster carers is to stand in the gap and love wholeheartedly, holding nothing back because that's what the children in our care need.

And because of my wonderful support network through church, family, friends and the fostering service, I have people to help me pick up the pieces afterwards. ”

What about the impact on birth children?



“ Initially, I was concerned about negative influences from other children, worrying they might teach my children language or behaviours I didn't like. However, after fostering for eight years, I can confidently say it has significantly impacted my permanent children, in a positive way.

My children have learnt to be patient, kind, thoughtful, open minded and non-judgemental because of all they have seen and understood. They have experienced loss when they say goodbye to little ones who may have lived with us for over a year but, in most cases, we have stayed in touch which brings such a richness to our lives. ”

If you'd like to find out more about becoming a foster carer, contact us on 0800 028 2158 or visit: worcestershire.gov.uk/fostering



Worcestershire
FOSTERING



FLOODING FOCUS

County resilience in the face of flooding

Worcestershire is no stranger to the forces of nature. With its rich landscape crisscrossed by the Rivers Severn, Avon and Teme, parts of the county have a long history of flooding. From the record-breaking floods of 1947 and 2007, to the storms of 2024, Worcestershire has endured its fair share of watery battles.

2024 brought more storms to test us. Storms Bert and Darragh swept through the county at speed, causing rivers to rise and roads and pavements to be underwater. In partnership with the emergency services, district councils, the Environment Agency and our contractors, we sprang into action.

The dedication in working tirelessly to help ensure our highways remain open and safe for residents, is remarkable.




Saving homes and businesses – flood defences at work

The £2.5 million flood defence project at Toronto Close, Lower Wick, Worcester, completed in September 2024, is successfully shielding homes along Laugherne Brook. The scheme includes embankments, a wall, and the restoration of the historic Old Road wall, plus two community-operated flood gates.

Elsewhere, we are supporting three other Environment Agency-led flood schemes:

- **Bewdley:** flood defences for Beale's Corner are progressing with wall structures in place.
- **Tenbury:** a £25-30 million river defense project is in development from the Environment Agency.
- **Severn Stoke:** we are aiding the Environment Agency in financing flood defense designs and costs.

Additional smaller schemes are protecting communities across Worcestershire, including Upton upon Severn, Powick, Kempsey, Hollywood, Worcester, Hagley, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Broadway, Sedgeberrow, Harvington, and Bewdley.



[Click here to report flooding issues](#)

After the storms - the recovery effort

When the waters return back to the usual levels, the next job is to support those who have been affected. Streets and homes, coated in silt and debris, need urgent attention. The recovery effort includes teams assessing damage, cleaning up, and helping communities rebuild.

To aid this huge effort, our Flood Recovery Support Grants for businesses and residents offer a lifeline to those hit hardest by floods by providing financial support to repair, rebuild, and recover. gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings



COUNTRY PARKS AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Country parks shine on and win Green Flag Award

Worcestershire's parks shine once again as three of our cherished green spaces received the Green Flag Award in 2024. Worcester Woods Country Park, Waseley Hills Country Park, and St Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve proudly join the ranks of the UK's top parks, continuing their streak of excellence with over a decade of recognition.

These awards not only highlight the high standard of our country parks, they also show the commitment of the dedicated teams and volunteers who work relentlessly to maintain the high standards of these parks. Their hard work ensures that all those who visit the parks have access to vibrant, safe, and accessible spaces for relaxation, exercise and play.



Our parks and green spaces are a safe haven for children to play and they can improve mental health by reducing stress, anxiety and loneliness. Quite simply, they can help you to be happy!

Discover for yourself why these parks are celebrated as some of the finest in the UK. Visit: [worcestershire.gov.uk/countryside](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/countryside)

A path for everyone...

Our county is home to a network of nearly 16,000 public rights of way, offering everyone the opportunity to explore the county's beautiful countryside, bustling towns, and peaceful woodland paths. Whether you're a walker, cyclist, wheeler or horse rider, there's a route waiting for you.

A public right of way is a legally protected route that allows public access over land at any time. These paths are marked with signposts, also known as waymarks, making them easy to identify. In built up areas, they may be paved, while in countryside settings, they often wind through fields, woods, and open landscapes.

A route just for you could be just around the corner

Discover your public rights of way with our map. Whether you're planning a leisurely stroll, an adventurous bike ride, or a scenic horse trek, our map can help you to explore our county's natural beauty:

[worcestershire.gov.uk/prow](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/prow)

We rely on your involvement to keep the public rights of way network in a good condition. If you find any issues while out and about, please report them through the county's dedicated webpage:

[worcestershire.gov.uk/ReportIt](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ReportIt)

WHAT'S ON IN WORCESTERSHIRE 2025



Worcestershire's unrivalled event schedule welcomes visitors from across the country and provides residents with plenty of things to do locally.

Visit Worcestershire has put together a list of unmissable events happening across the county in 2025.

Dates for your diary...

Family fun

7-9 March: Malvern Festival of Ideas

17 April: Countrytastic 2025, Three Counties Showground

20-21 June: Worcester Balloon Festival

12 July: Evesham River Festival

10 August: Worcester Show

22-31 August: SALTFEST Town Festival, Droitwich

Music & arts

12-15 March: Regal Folk Festival, Tenbury Wells

2-5 May: Upton Folk Festival

24 May-1 June: Elgar Festival

24-25 May: Alvechurch Music Festival

31 May-7 June: The Rik Mayall Comedy Festival, Droitwich

6-15 June: Broadway Arts Festival

27-29 June: Upton Jazz Festival

21-24 August: Sunshine Festival, Upton

25-28 September: Worcester Film Festival

Food & drink

5-6 July: Great Malvern Food & Drink Festival

26-27 July: Three Counties Food & Drink Festival

14 September: Broadway Food Festival

4 October: Tenbury Applefest

The great outdoors

Mid-March to Mid-May: Blossom Trail

8-11 May: RHS Spring Festival 2025

24 May-1 June: Malvern Walking Festival

13-15 June: Royal Three Counties Show

5 July: Hanbury Countryside Show

2 August: Tenbury Countryside Show

23-25 August: Pershore Plum Festival

26-28 September: Malvern Autumn Show 2025

Heritage

26-27 April: International Living History Festival, Avoncroft Museum

1-3 August: Battle of Evesham

12-21 September: Heritage Open Days

The Visit Worcestershire website provides plenty of inspirational content including blogs, itineraries, local hidden gems and things to do locally across Worcestershire.

Check out the Visit Worcestershire website

 VISIT WORCESTERSHIRE

Celebrating the success of Taste Worcestershire

In the Autumn of 2024, Visit Worcestershire launched Taste Worcestershire – a county-wide initiative to encourage residents and visitors to try a new dining experience or visit a local restaurant which they hadn't dined at before.

To support this, free Golden Tickets could be downloaded which included special discounts and information about menus that were created to celebrate Worcestershire's agricultural heritage from field to fork produce.



Having recently moved to Worcestershire, we were thrilled to explore the fantastic variety of restaurants the area has to offer. The Taste Worcestershire Golden Ticket was the perfect way to dive into the local dining scene – we used it three times during the event and loved every experience!

– James from Worcester



At the same time, Taste Worcestershire supported hospitality businesses across the county through a normally quieter period for the industry, with the hope of attracting repeat visits from Taste Worcestershire customers in the future.



“We're proud to be based in Worcestershire and involved in the campaign. Keeping things local and supporting local businesses is something we are really passionate about.”

– Will Kerton, owner of Droitwich Salt



Just under 3,000 Golden Tickets were downloaded to use in 59 of the county's best restaurants, eateries and producers, with a variety of great value offers which included special discounts and purposely created set menus.

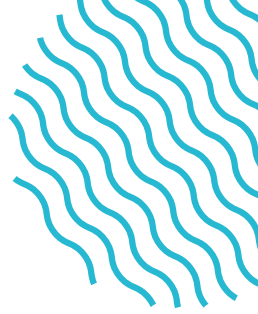
As part of the three week feast, Taste Worcestershire also placed a spotlight on local producers through a series of “foodie hero” stories. Among the highlights was a specially created Worcestershire dish by Ivan Tisdall-Downes of Native at the Netherwood Estate, produced exclusively for the event. The recipe, and more information on the iconic Worcestershire dish, can be found on the Visit Worcestershire website.

Taste Worcestershire is set to return from 6-25 October 2025. Keep an eye out on the Visit Worcestershire social media channels for the latest updates, and be sure to download your unmissable foodie offers.

- facebook.com/visitworcestershire
- instagram.com/visitworcestershire
- x.com/VisitWorcs
- visitworcestershire.org

WHO DOES WHAT

IN WORCESTERSHIRE?



To help you find out who does what across the county, we have summarised how different councils currently work to provide you with a range of services, in addition to making decisions about those services. Like much of England, Worcestershire has two main tiers of local government – county council and district councils – with responsibility for services split between the two. We are also represented by MPs and town and parish councils.

6 Members of Parliament

Members of Parliament (MPs) for Worcestershire areas elected to represent local interests or concerns in the House of Commons. MPs consider and can propose new laws as well as raising issues that matter to you.

[Click here and add your postcode to find your local MP](#)

County council

Worcestershire County Council provides services that cover the whole county such as highways and transport, education, waste disposal, adults and children's social care, libraries and country parks.

For decision making, alongside Cabinet and full Council, **Overview and Scrutiny** is a function which ensures that Worcestershire residents receive the best possible services from the council and its partners. All county councillors who are not members of the Cabinet are eligible to be involved in Overview and Scrutiny.

[Click here to find out more about your local councillor](#)

[Click here to find out more about how Overview and Scrutiny works](#)

6 district councils

District councils (sometimes called borough or city councils) provide more local services such as refuse and recycling collection, planning, environmental health, leisure facilities, street cleaning, park and play areas.

[Click here to find out more about your district council](#)

195 town and parish councils

Town and parish councils. The most local tier of local government is a parish or town council. They maintain local amenities such as recreational areas and cemeteries. The parish council is also consulted on highway and planning applications.

[Click here and add your postcode to find out more about your local town or parish council](#)

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP AND SUPPORT

If you're looking for support or need further information, you can find lots of help and advice on our website:

Adult Front Door (Social Care)

If you are struggling with everyday living tasks, contact the Adult Front Door to make a referral.

worcestershire.gov.uk/MakeAReferral

If you are unable to get online, call **01905 768053** to book a telephone appointment to make the referral. The Adult Front Door's opening hours are **Monday to Thursday, 9am-5pm**; and **Fridays, 9am-4.30pm**.

Births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships & citizenship

Information about our registration services, certificates, ceremony venues, citizenship, deed poll and the coroner's service.

worcestershire.gov.uk/births-deaths-marriages-citizenship

Blue Badge

How you, or someone on your behalf, can apply for a Blue Badge.

worcestershire.gov.uk/blue-badge

Bus travel and passes

Find out about bus timetables, live travel updates, passes, tickets and operators.

worcestershire.gov.uk/bus-travel

Commercial Vehicle and Trailer (CVT) permits

If you wish to use a Household Recycling Centre for the disposal of household waste in a larger vehicle/trailer, you can apply for a permit (free for residents).

worcestershire.gov.uk/cvt-permits

Community Services Directory

This offers helpful information about registered health and wellbeing groups, services, and activities locally and across the county.

worcestershire.gov.uk/community-services-directory

Family Front Door

If you have any concerns about a child or young person living in Worcestershire and feel they may be in need of protection or safeguarding, contact us on **01905 822666**. Staff are available **Monday to Thursday, 9am-5pm** and **Fridays, 9am-4.30pm**.

worcestershire.gov.uk/refer-childrens-social-care

Household Recycling Centres

Information on what you can recycle, where your local Household Recycling Centre is and opening times.

worcestershire.gov.uk/household-recycling-centres

We don't collect your household waste bins, but you can visit your district council website to find out about bin collections.

Library membership

You can sign up for library membership, find information on your local library, manage your membership and find out what events and activities are happening near you.

worcestershire.gov.uk/worcestershire-libraries

Report an issue

with roads, highways or travel

Report it

You can report a wide range of road, highway and travel issues on our website, including pot holes, streetlighting, footpaths, overgrown trees, public rights of way and traffic lights.

worcestershire.gov.uk/reportit

[Click here to report a road or path issue](#)

Roadworks and live updates

Find details of planned roadworks and travel updates on our map.

worcestershire.gov.uk/roadworks-and-live-updates

School term dates and applying for a school place

Information on term dates and how to apply for a primary or secondary school place.

worcestershire.gov.uk/schools-education-and-learning

If you can't find what you're looking for on our website, or you'd like to speak to someone, our Customer Services Contact Centre can help with queries on many of our key council services. You can call us on **01905 765765** (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays).



SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

Skills Bootcamps: build your skills, boost your career

Aged 19+? Looking to switch things up? In business? Looking to upskill your workforce? How about gaining Skills for Life – for free!

Skills Bootcamps are flexible courses that are available to anyone living or working in Worcestershire. In just a few short weeks, you'll gain sector-specific skills, a guaranteed interview with a local employer, and the confidence to take your career to the next level – all without impacting any benefits you may receive.

With Skills Bootcamps available in areas like Construction, Marketing, Manufacturing, Nursing, Retrofit, Leadership, Management, Cyber, Early Years, and many more, there's something for everyone. Find out more at careersworcs.co.uk/skillsbootcamps or call **0300 666 3 666** and speak to Peter or Abbi.

Adult Learning Worcestershire: it's your turn to learn

It's never too late to learn something new. Our Adult Learning team offers fantastic courses across the year for people aged 19+ living in Worcestershire. Whether you're looking to gain new skills, meet new people, connect with your community, boost your career, or improve your wellbeing, there's a course for you!

Learning is fun to do. Discover the full range of courses at worcestershire.gov.uk/courses or call **01905 728537**.

Careers Worcestershire: a pathway to success

Are you 16-24 and ready to take the next steps into work? Careers Worcestershire offers free, tailored support to help you into education, employment, skills, or training. From 1:1 advice to wellbeing support and guidance on apprenticeships, our team is here to help.

"They helped me with mock interviews, which gave me the confidence to get into work and find future jobs by myself. I felt comfortable talking through my options. Thanks to Careers Worcs, I got not one, but two jobs!"
— Scott

Visit our hubs in Worcester, Bromsgrove, Kidderminster, or Redditch. Call **0300 666 3 666** or book at careersworcs.co.uk

Advice and support for children and young people with SEND

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire SENDIASS service provides **FREE**, impartial, and confidential information, advice and support for parents, carers, children, and young people aged 0-25 who have or may have SEND.

The team helps families understand Worcestershire's SEND policies and procedures, offering guidance tailored to their specific circumstances which enables families to make well-informed decisions and access the right support.

In addition, SENDIASS offers free training workshops for parents, carers, and professionals.

For support, call **01905 768153 (Monday-Friday, 8.30am-4pm)**, email sendiass@worcestershire.gov.uk or visit hwsendiass.co.uk.



BUSINESS SUPPORT IN WORCESTERSHIRE

The county council is dedicated to making our county a thriving place for businesses, with a strong focus on sustainability, innovation, and growth.

Whether you're starting a new venture, growing your business, or looking to invest, the council offers a range of support to help you succeed. Over the past 18 months, we supported around **537 businesses**, issued **313 grants**, and provided valuable insight and guidance to **273** aspiring entrepreneurs through our Start-It Masterclasses. Find out more: [worcestershire.gov.uk/businesssupport](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/businesssupport)

Start your business

Worcestershire has a variety of co-working spaces and startup-friendly environments to help entrepreneurs get their businesses off the ground. With over £1.3 billion invested in research and development and £55 million in funding already accessed by local businesses, our county provides great opportunities for startups. There are also over 30 accelerators, incubators, and support programmes to help new businesses thrive.

Innovate and grow

We're keen to help businesses not only start but also be better at what they do. The Innovation Worcestershire programme offers tailored support to help businesses develop ideas into new products, services, and technologies.

The Specialist Advisor Programme provides expert advice, diagnostics, and funding opportunities to keep your business relevant, competitive and successful.

Businesses can also apply for Research and Development (R&D) grants to support new ideas, whether you're improving existing products or creating market-first innovations.

Invest in Worcester Six

For businesses looking to expand, Worcester Six Business Park is a prime location near the M5, offering easy access, rapid development options, and units ranging from 10,000 to 300,000 sq ft. It combines the best of both worlds: modern amenities and a charming rural setting. With great schools, healthcare, and affordable housing, Worcester Six is a fantastic place to grow your business while attracting and keeping top talent.

Find out more about business support and grants

“
The support has been incredible. I've tapped into so many resources I didn't even know existed.

— Samantha Launchbury
Sevenside Virtual Assistant

”



LIBRARIES UNLOCKED

Don't miss out on the incredible benefits of Libraries Unlocked! Thanks to cutting-edge technology, Libraries Unlocked offers flexibility and convenience for library visitors over longer opening hours.

As a member, you can borrow and return books, use free library computers and Wi-Fi, unwind in quiet study spaces, and take part in exciting community events. Plus, if you need a space for work or group sessions, our meeting rooms are available to hire!

Libraries Unlocked has made a huge impact, with over 25,000 visits, 27,000 book issues, and 7,200 computer sessions during extended hours.

It's also become a hub for community activities, hosting everything from author talks and NHS clinics to Beavers and Brownies groups, Adult Learning courses, and volunteer-run Connect Groups.

Members have said:

“
Brilliant idea, and it's enabled us as a family to access the library more.

As a working mum, extended hours have allowed us to pop in at times the library wouldn't normally be open.

Find out more about Libraries Unlocked in Worcestershire

Whether you're a local resident, part of a charitable organisation, or running a club, these spaces are perfect for your next event, providing a safe, well-equipped setting to bring people together.

Libraries Unlocked is currently available at nine libraries across Worcestershire and membership is FREE for everyone aged 15 and over.



HELP WITH CHILDCARE COSTS

Changes to childcare support mean you might now be eligible for more help than ever before. Support from Childcare Choices can give your child a great start while giving you work choices, helping you make the juggle of family life a little easier.

Eligible working parents of children aged **9 months to 3 years** can now get:

- Up to 15 hours per week of funded childcare, across 38 weeks of the year.
- This is expanding to 30 hours per week from September 2025.

Wraparound childcare has also started expanding, with more places becoming available for primary school aged children and giving better support for parents before and after school.

3- and 4-year-olds can get:

- Up to 15 hours per week of funded childcare, across 38 weeks of the year, for ALL 3- and 4-year-olds.
- An additional 15 hours per week for eligible working families (so a total of 30 hours per week for eligible working families).

[Click here to check what you're eligible for](#)

2-year-olds in families using additional government support can get:

- Up to 15 hours per week of funded childcare, across 38 weeks of the year.

Eligible families in receipt of benefits including Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Universal Credit (with an income of £15,400 per year or less).

2-year-olds can also get funded childcare if they are looked after by the local authority, have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), get Disability Living Allowance or have left care under an adoption order, special guardianship order or child arrangements order.

Universal Credit Childcare

If you pay for childcare while you go back to work, you can get up to 85 per cent of childcare costs paid back to you. You can use Universal Credit Childcare alongside 15 hours and 30 hours funded childcare schemes too.

Tax-Free Childcare

Eligible families can set up a Tax-Free Childcare account to pay for their childcare. For every £8 you pay into this account, the government will pay in £2. You can use Tax-Free Childcare alongside 15 hours and 30 hours funded childcare schemes too.



Your special day with Worcestershire Celebrants

Celebrate your special day, your way.

Our Celebrants will work with you to tell your story and the opportunities for your ceremony are endless.

You can choose how to celebrate, with or without a legal marriage or civil partnership.



Commitment ceremonies

Renewal of vows

**Celebrating
marriages abroad**



Religious and Pagan customs:

Hand fasting

**Blessing the
Elements**



**Click here to find out about our
Bespoke Worcestershire service**