

Priceless

A465

NB	SB
5500	6600
5200	6700

HAYWOOD LANE

NB	SB
800	1700
500	600

MERRYHILL LANE

RAILWAY

EB	WB
N/A	N/A
3500	2400

SC2A

NB	SB
6500	6600
7500	6700

NB	SB
6800	6900
7600	7700

# Place Hereford Civic Society

The City's built environment forum

## Herefordshire City

A vision worth considering?

Summer 2015

### Richard Ball - Herefordshire Council

Assistant Director Place Based Commissioning

### Amazing Places of Hereford

Huntington

### Me and My House

John Faulkner

### Hereford Now

Archive Centre

### Special Event – Hereford Tomorrow

The latest from the new administration  
Our Councillors talk about their plans for  
the county - Thursday 17th September 2015

Interested parties discuss HCS's visionary  
proposals to enhance the Local Plan for a county  
wide eco city - as launched in this edition  
- Thursday 15th October 2015

Both events, 7 for 7.30, at the Kindle Centre, by ASDA, Hereford



## PREFACE



Last year (19.11.14) Clive Aslet, Editor of Country Life wrote:

*"Leintwardine .... (is) being transformed without any vision beyond treasury diktat and developers' greed by additions that don't relate to the organism onto which they have been grafted".*

**With developers relying on the National Planning Policy Framework the views of local people are barely considered; with our Local Plan now awaiting final approval we are all expecting to rely on that to stop inappropriate development. But will it? In spite of thousands of hours of input by local people, the Council staff and developers and consultants (many who don't live here) the plan is a volume of, sometimes, confusing paragraphs. Many are quite precise but some quite vague. The Plan relies on the Nutrient Management Plan for the River Wye that only has "to mitigate the effects of phosphates". Is this a proper plan?**

So, whilst we are keen to see the Local Plan in place, we have chosen to be somewhat controversial and propose a more exciting view of the future. The Local Plan can be modified over

time, and HCS hopes that some of the proposals we draft might contribute to a broader and more sustainable future for the whole of Herefordshire. Inspired by Prof. Sir Alan Wilson's lecture to the New University – see short report PLACE Spring 2015 - we have grasped the mantle, taken advice and developed a bold proposal for a county wide city. The Wolfson Foundation's competition for a new garden city was also an inspiration and we have chosen to incorporate the whole county, including the market towns, into one self-contained organism. **Beautiful, industrious and cultural.**

HCS presents this plan for wide discussion, and hopes that this vision might inspire our new administration into including some of our proposals into the various plans that will be needed to support the Local Plan. The Hereford Development Plan,

supposedly the next project on the list for Council officers, being the hub of our new proposal, needs to be clear about its role and the importance of Hereford and its links with the market towns.

- John Bothamley

### Contributors

**John Bothamley** – Chairman HCS, developer and chair of charitable grant making trust

**John Faulkner** – Retired chartered civil engineer, chairman of HCS 2003-2006

**John Lawrence** – Master planner

**David Whitehead** – Hereford historian and author.

**Design & Layout** - H. Joof - Lead Designer & T. Schoenfeld - Art direction

## NEWS & COMMENTS

### New Cabinet appointments

Historically departments of government would have an elected member overseeing the work of civil servants. Our new administration in Herefordshire Council seems to have blurred the responsibilities somewhat. Appointments made in May are:

Cllr. H. Bramer – contracts and assets;  
Cllr. G. Powell – economy and corporate services;  
Cllr. P. Price – Infrastructure  
Cllr. P. Rone – Transport and Roads.

HCS restricts communication with officers and cabinet members respecting the many calls on their time. If we have a particular query on, say, a cycle route to whom should we

address our enquiry?! Geoff Hughes, our Director of economy, communities and corporate has to report to all of them!

### Date for opening of new Oxford-London rail link

The opening date for a new rail link between London and Oxford has been announced. The £130m line will run from Oxford Parkway, the first new station in the city for 80 years, to London Marylebone from 26 October. This inspires HCS to remind Network Rail for long overdue improvements to the line from Hereford.



### Place Alliance

The Place Alliance, set up following the publication of the Farrell Review, brings together organisations and individuals who share a belief that the quality of the built environment – the places in which we live, work and play – has a profound influence on people's lives. We believe that through collaboration we can create and maintain better places. To this end, Place Alliance supporters share knowledge and support each other to demand and realise buildings, streets and spaces that enhance the quality of life for all.

The first meeting of the Place Alliance - Urban Rooms Group met in London and was well attended with representatives from groups across the country, including HCS. There were a wide range of urban room experiences and people were at different points in developing their programmes. It was agreed that urban rooms must be focused on engaging communities in their local environments, to encourage a sense of ownership and bring local people's views and creativity into how places are seen and managed. Full minutes on our web site.

### Balfour Beatty

The Council's 'task and finish' group looked at what had gone well in the first year of the contract for maintenance of the public realm and what could be improved in the future. The group was 'highly supportive' of the introduction of 13 locality stewards who work directly with local councillors and are trained to inspect local roads, paths, parks and open spaces.

The report stated: "Whilst it was noted it is early days, the group was very encouraged by this approach and very supportive of its introduction." A pilot project to give traditional lengthsman a greater role in parishes by not only keeping ditches and drains clear, but also fixing potholes on minor roads, was declared a success.

"The group is highly supportive of the council's recommendation to roll out the use of the Enhanced Lengthsman Scheme and recommends that as many parish councils as possible takes up this option."

### Three Elms Community Planning

Two days of consultation at the Community Planning Weekend in mid May involved inviting everybody to contribute, there were presentations and round table discussions on just what would look good on this large site. The Church Commissioners, owners of the site, and with this area included in the draft Local Plan for housing, are approaching the Council with ideas that have been well discussed and commented upon.

Their initial idea is to build about 1,000 homes with plenty of formal and informal play areas, a new primary school and new employment uses. This style of consultation is well established by John Thompson and Partners and, with a good team already in place, should lead to an exemplar scheme.

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## NEWS & COMMENTS

### BID gets going

Now with a full time employee the Business Improvement District is getting going on many fronts; especially shop fronts – covering empty shop premises with photographic interpretations of what could be happening behind the glass! HCS hugely supports this work, wishes it had happened years ago and respectfully refers shop keepers to our article on name display boards in our Spring 2014 magazine. Here we were inspiring shopkeepers to up their image!

The way in which places are perceived is critical said a report from the Commission for Underperforming Towns and Cities, May 2015 “A brighter future for our towns and cities.” Branding and the means by which that brand is promoted can be hugely important in capturing attention and securing investment. Great places have their own identity.



Masters' House Ledbury

### Masters' House - Ledbury

This is an impressive refurbishment, and asset transfer, funded by the HC and the Heritage Lottery Fund. What a shame the library is only open during usual working hours and closed on Wednesdays.

We, including HCS, should be better at community involvement and using our assets more intensively. HCS is being asked to look at our own Town Hall but we need manpower to consider alternatives.



Masters' House Ledbury

### Herefordshire Archaeology in ruins?

Not quite – several HCS members attended Rising to the Challenge being the 17th annual symposium of the Archaeology Heritage and Conservation Department of HC at the new Herefordshire Archives and Records Centre on 30th May 2015.

The few remaining staff described the scope of their work and their current projects, including on-going work on the

Rotherwas Ribbon. Other projects, that have to be externally funded, include the Bromyard Downs Project and the Roman Families Project. Tim Hoverd continues to lead the service.

### Urban Room for Hereford

Now with endorsement of the idea from the City Council we are waiting news on the future of a number of Council owned iconic buildings, such as the Library and the Butter Market. HCS considers the location of the new Urban Room is paramount for it to be successful; and is considering partnering with other organisations that need a “shop front” and provide services to Herefordians and tourists.

More information from our web site [www.herefordcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.herefordcivicsociety.org.uk)

### Mayoral questions

Recently George Osborne said he wants cities to take greater control and responsibility over all the key things that make a city work, from transport and housing to skills, and key public services like health and social care.

Osborne told councils: “We will hand power from the centre to cities to give you greater control over your local transport, housing, skills and healthcare. And we'll give the levers you need to grow your local economy and make sure local people keep

the rewards; it's right people have a single point of accountability: someone they elect, who takes the decisions and carries the can. So with these new powers for cities must come new city-wide elected mayors who work with local councils. I will not impose this model on anyone. But nor will I settle for less.” How will that work with Hereford City Council being essentially a parish council and yet with a mayor as leader, but having no authority over the County Council?

### All Party Parliamentary Group for Civic Societies

APPGs are informal cross-party groups that work within Parliament and are run by, and for Members of the Commons and Lords, involving individuals and organisations who wish to promote their cause with key decision makers.

The general election meant that all existing groups formed to debate issues have to re-register and Civic Voice is now in the process of re-forming the APPG for Civic Societies. Civic Voice Chair, Dr Freddie Gick said “Regular communication with elected officials at all levels is a key part of what we do as civic groups. It is by coming together as a movement with 75,000 members that gives us our voice. This is how we level the playing field with big business”.

## HEREFORD NOW



### Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre

This is a building that asks to be considered. Much glazing on the south elevation with brise soleil suggests up market offices, but to the north a huge windowless block, clad in cedar shingles, suggests something different. A recess between the two indicates the

entrance and opens into a narrow hall open to the very top of the building, with sky lights. This is an innovative building by Architype, using the German Passivhaus standards on insulation and climate control to preserve the County's records. Without conventional air-conditioning this design sets a new standard, and is the first in the country for the storage of sensitive artefacts in a timber framed building.

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# HEREFORDSHIRE TOMORROW?

With the Local Plan for the County still to be ratified and, remembering that it runs to millions of words, here HCS tries to interpret and improve the plan in just two pages. Local Plans can, and will, be updated and we hope that some of the suggestions here might be incorporated. Inspired by Professor Sir Alan Wilson when he spoke at the first New University lecture in March 2015, we present a proposal for the creation of a county-wide sustainable city, somewhat more visionary than the Local Plan.

We believe all the statements here are valid and worthy of consideration and generally indisputable. With input from a former student of Leon Krier, the world-renowned urbanist and designer of Poundbury and a small team of inspired thinkers HCS presents a plan to put Herefordshire on the map. So much has been written, so much research conducted and yet creating the nirvana of the perfect 21st Century city has alluded us. We cut through the jargon and highlight the key points that need consideration and respectfully propose— Herefordshire City.

Might the new administration take up our suggestions? An exciting vision is needed and this plan could be the basis. Here we want to transform Herefordshire into a world-class city region with Hereford the hub, linked to the market towns and all joined by threads of public transport and activity.

## Here are some indisputable facts

Herefordshire's unspoilt countryside, orchards, hopfields and Hereford cattle are part of our capital assets.

the county is somewhat inaccessible from the rest of the country.

providing services in a sparsely populated county is expensive.

our reputation is good - the SAS, the Three Choirs and much more.

## To capitalise on our attributes we

maintain our rural agriculture and cease all development in the open countryside (apart from in fill plots for affordable housing).

improve the rail links to London and Birmingham, and principal trunk roads

concentrate services in the City, market towns, a new market town and on the main transport links.

but designing a city is more than the design of infrastructure and transport links, in "City of the Future" Jeffrey Tumlin writes: – *it is about considering the type of community we want to be. Sustainability is more than just about ecology and environment, it is the very essence of positive caring communities.*

Walking must be pleasant for everyone everywhere.

Cycling must be safe and easy for people of all ages.

(Ideally) the needs of daily life must be within walking distance.

Transit within the city must be fast, frequent, reliable and dignified.

Neighbourhoods must instil pride.

Residents must feel invested in their home and city.

Energy must be local and sustainable.

Social networks must be encouraged to thrive.

Beauty must be ubiquitous.

## To be realistic HCS adds these indisputable facts

Personal transport is the most convenient and lessens demand on public transport.

Some congestion inspires the use of public transport.

Rural Parish Councils need to work with each other.

Communities need to be involved in decision making.

Local authorities do not provide housing or jobs, the private sector does.

Public bodies need to concentrate on their core responsibilities, maintenance of transport links, security, fire, health services and education.

Leadership is paramount.

## From all these grand words

a vision has to be drawn and acted upon – here is what HCS considers could be a way forward. To achieve this vision is far from easy – we need leadership to drive this forward.

## References

City of the Future: Time to jettison the Jetsons' vision of cities - Jeffrey Tumlin, director, Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates - 2014

Eco-towns: Learning from International Experience - PRP, URBED and Design for Homes - Oct. 2008

Understanding and measuring social sustainability – Saffron Woodcraft, director Social Life - 2014

Creating strong communities: How to measure the social sustainability of new housing developments – The Berkeley Group - 2013

Vitoria-Gasteiz – European Green Capital 2012 – City Council

Urbed Eco City - Wolfson Prize [www.tinyurl.com/pnklkrp](http://www.tinyurl.com/pnklkrp)

## Government Funded Infrastructure

### Railways

Improved direct link to London  
Small stopping light trains added to existing rail routes within county with frequent stops and adjacent car parks.

### Roads

One new river crossing?  
Improved Hereford to Worcester Road  
Improved A49 Dutch style road hierarchy –

1. Through roads for high volumes of fast traffic on longer distances (National 60 mph limit)

2. Distributor Roads, including country lanes, which connect through roads and local access roads (30mph and 20mph in urban areas)

3. Local Access Roads from which end destinations can be reached (10mph – these essentially being shared space)

4. Town and Hereford Centres to be pedestrian areas (like High Town) with

free, group taxi buggies to transport interchanges and car parks

### Hospital facilities

Hereford main hospital and through GP practices.

### Education

Folly Lane FE Centres expanded, New University in City Centre. New schools within new communities. Remove choice at primary level to build on local communities and save on transport costs.

### Parking

car parks around periphery of towns, and at light train stops.

### Security

Fire, Police and Ambulance services managed together.

### Social services

LA statutory provisions as required.

## The Proposal for Herefordshire City

**A City hub providing focus for the county with cultural and major events. Market towns providing similar but with local focus, with a new town at Ewyas Harold. Groups of rural parishes working with their local market town. All new development (housing and commercial) concentrated on the city, market towns and along the principle transport links.**

Many new light train stops along these routes, possibly:

- NORTH at Eye, LEOMINSTER, Ford, Newton, Moreton
- EAST at Bartestree, Tarrington, Trumpet, LEDBURY, Colwall
- WEST at Courtyard and White Cross.
- SOUTH at Bullingham, Newton Farm, Allensmore, Tram Inn, Kilpeck, EWYAS HAROLD/Pontrilas

Integrated transport hubs at Hereford rail and bus stations.

## Private Sector Infrastructure

**New housing and businesses** within one mile walking distance of transport links  
**Football Ground** - inspire the Bulls to be a prominent part of the City like other footer teams.

**Transport schemes** Dial-a-ride – park-and-share – park-and-choose - drive-and-share\* schemes

\*Drive and share scheme, first mooted in HCS PLACE Summer 2014. This is a scheme to high-light suitable places for drivers to give lifts to others, it is a move to make the sharing of transport an acceptable and regular thing. HCS wants Herefordshire Council to add Drive and Share to its several other sharing policies.

## The Plan

Our drawing highlights the main areas for new development using brownfield sites and infill in established settlements. New build around the city and market towns and along the principal transport links. No development in the open countryside – too unsustainable to maintain and service

## Going Forward

HCS presents this plan as a serious master plan proposal for a county wide sustainable city. Some will be affronted, some thrilled and inspired but HCS would like to hear discussion and comment. Our aim is to inspire 186,000 people to "get involved", have their say, take an interest and a pride in the county they call home.

## Lord Rogers

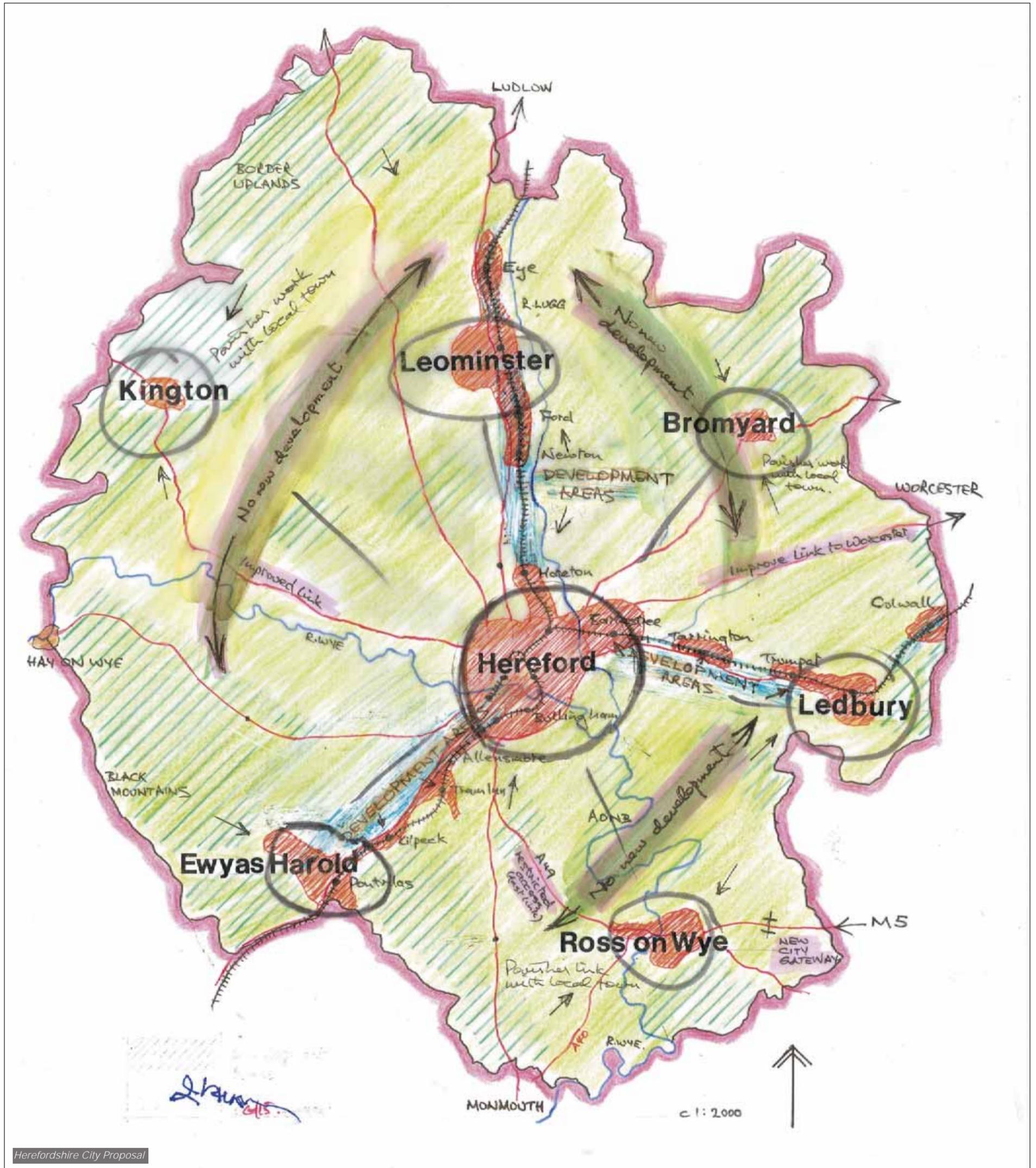
"In every other Western city that I have been it has everything (masterplanning, land assembly) done by the local authority, and the developer comes in after. In England we call in the developer to do this and, of course, their interests are very different." Lord Richard Rogers' prescription for the regeneration of town centres includes:

Use brownfield before green to build sustainable new towns and cities

Develop from the centre outwards

Build strong transport infrastructure

# HEREFORDSHIRE TOMORROW?



Herefordshire City Proposal



Continental Rickshaw



Station Hereford



Light Train



City People Mover

# AMAZING PLACES OF HEREFORD



Chapel at Huntington

## Huntington

**Huntington is ostensibly well protected as a Conservation Area; its best houses are listed and the grounds of the Court and the church are a locally registered historic park and garden. This cluster of designated 'assets' will be weighed in the balance against the 1000 or so houses proposed for the immediate hinterland by the Church Commissioners. Even with an extensive cordon sanitaire drawn around the historic nucleus, immense pressure will be exerted on this quiet enclave of rural life. No doubt, the inhabitants will follow the example of Huntington House and create multi-layered defences to secure their privacy, leaving little or nothing to be enjoyed by their new neighbours or the wider community.**

Living on a new estate at Holmer in the 1970s with two young children it was not too long before we found Huntington. A walk across the NW corner of the racecourse – where curlews could still be heard before the golf course arrived – through Westfields brought us into Huntington Lane and the real countryside. Two farms, a bijou church, a couple

of gentry- establishments, set in their green policies and a few cottages and a rippling brook made-up this small community. Our favourite spot was standing on the hump-back bridge with its pretty white rails, looking east across Huntington Pool where you were bound to see ducks, swans and even a kingfisher. In those days the Court belonged to the MP for Leominster,

Mr. Temple-Morris, who upset some of his electorate, when it was reported in the newspaper that he was shooting the Canada geese, who came to share the pool with his swans. The Court's white walls reflected perfectly in the still water of the Pool. Taylor's county map of 1754 shows that the Pool served a watermill at its eastern end but when it was drained and de-silted in 1997 it was found to be defined by wellmade stone walls and had a laid-stone bottom. This led to the suggestion that the Pool formed the centre piece of a formal canal garden in the late 17th century, similar to those that exist today at Court-of-Noke and Moor Court in the parish of Pembridge.

The present owners have pursued this theme, most notably in their planting with pairs of lollipop maples. The Court was built in the late 17th or early 18th century on an ancient site but was gentrified by a branch of the Phillips family from Eaton Bishop. They sold the estate in 1823 to Fowler Price of Ty'nycoed, Breconshire who was High Sheriff of his native county but came to rusticate beside the Yazor Brook. He has a memorial tablet in the Cathedral dated 1837 and left his widow Anne an estate at Huntington of 467 acres, leased from the Dean and Chapter. The Prices were gone by the early 1860s but left one or two tasteful reminders of their sojourn; the fine cast iron porch on the north side of the Court and some exotic planting –

the Wellingtonia on the lawns, an Indian bean tree (*Catalpa bignonioides*), an ancient walnut and a mixed acacia and yew-walk along the drive. They also had a hand in rebuilding in 1848 the little chapel of St Mary Magdalene in a Romanesque style designed by James Cranston of Birmingham, the architect-son of James, the nurseryman, founder of the nearby Kings Acre Nursery.



The White Bridge at Huntington

The settlement also includes New Court Farm, a dignified house still surrounded by its traditional farm buildings; the Court Farm, with its farm buildings converted for residential use and Huntington House a pleasant early Georgian brick house accompanied by an earlier timber framed service wing. Seen in yesteryear from the bridge this was the perfect counterpoise to the Court with its mature gardens observed across the tail-end of the Pool and its boggy margins. Sadly, it is now hidden behind leylandii hedges and tall wooden fences, designed like a military compound to exclude all public views. - David Whitehead – Hereford historian and author.



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## PLANNING MATTERS



### Me and My Home

- John Faulkner

**The Point is the white block of flats on the corner of Aylestone Hill and Folly Lane next to the Sixth Form College. The site was originally occupied by Carfax House which was the Judges' Lodgings for when they came to the assizes. It was a large late Victorian House set in a large garden with some very handsome and mature trees. In later years the garden had not been very well looked after by the colleges who occupied and used part of it as a car park.**

In 2005 it was ripe for redevelopment and a planning application for its demolition and replacement by a block of flats and two adjacent town houses was submitted by IE Developments, a Hereford developer. This application resulted in some differences of opinion within HCS, between those who felt an example of good modern architecture would be good for the city as against those who felt that Carfax House should be refurbished; but it was eventually agreed to support the application. The architect was Warren Benbow. Alan Brook's latest edition of Pevsner describes it as an "effective modernist pastiche". It is a four storey L shaped block with white render and much glazing housing 14 flats and with two penthouses on the top floor; it was completed in 2007.

A key feature was that the site was not over developed and the garden and its large trees were preserved which the residents can enjoy, particularly if, like I do, you live on the ground floor. I came to live there in 2008 after my wife Dorothy died in 2007. We were living out at Ruckhall, where our house had an acre of garden and I realized that I would not cope with it on my own. Also, living out there you need to have a car and I realized that one day I would have to give that up. So I decided to move into town and started looking at flats. I struck lucky with a flat at The Point being on the market and so I moved in as the first occupier, which had been standing empty, as the original owner had bought it as an investment.

The main attractions of the flats to me were that they were well built, with under floor electric heating and insulated against the noise from Aylestone Hill. The detailing and fittings are good, it is convenient for town, I can walk there in 15 minutes, and has a garden where I do not have to cut the grass. I have a large living room/kitchen and two bedrooms so friends can come

to stay and it is ideal for what I need. Perhaps there is too much security, as any of you who have been to The Point will know – outer gates opened with a code or by remote control, locked doors into the entrance halls and locked doors into each apartment not to mention burglar alarms; attractive to older people living on their own as many of us do, but not so good if there is an emergency. Also lots of modern fittings and gadgets and in these days of planned obsolescence they then have to be maintained and replaced. Altogether though a very good place to live.



John Faulkner

### Big cul-de-sacs predominate.

Our small planning committee continues to monitor and comment on major planning applications. Particular concerns are the proposals for large, somewhat tedious, housing cul-de-sacs; such as the land off Hampton Dene Road (151360) and Holmer (151460). With little regard to orientation of standard house designs, most of these applications fail at the first hurdle in the view of HCS.

The application for a petrol station (151072) on the ASDA roundabout is most inappropriate at this gateway to the City, where there is already outline consent for a flat development.

### Planning App. 151237 & 8

Planning App. 151237 & 8. Old Market. Proposed scheme of 'place making' installations. HCS has written to Herefordshire Council objecting to this application which appears to want to turn the new Old Market into a standard style shopping mall; works of art and possibly tacky stuff hanging between the buildings! Worse is their wish to have their own Hereford Bull. We already have a fine one in High Town. Further, the granite drinking trough, given to the City, should not be re-sited in or adjacent to a commercial development – it ought to go in High Town.

### Richard Ball - Herefordshire Council

- Assistant Director Place Based Commissioning

On 22nd June Richard met with John Bothamley and updated us on highway matters and improvements to the City. It was good to see an integrated Hereford City Centre Traffic Package with matching materials and a plan including Commercial Road, Commercial Street and High Town, as well as amendments to Newmarket St./Blue School St. (once the Link Road is open to traffic).

The roll out of the Package will be over three years, with the High Town refurbishment out to public consultation very soon. Commercial Road layout includes trees and two cycle lanes. As this is the only part of the Package with **separate cycle lanes** one wonders if drivers and cyclists will be confused as to their proper conduct. Short cycle lanes can encourage a cavalier attitude not conducive to sharing the highway with all users. With **pedestrian crossing lights** – surely not necessary in a 20 mph zone, subject to this surprising statement on the drawing – "Traffic modelling to confirm need for signalisation." At Widemarsh Gate **pedestrian crossing lights** are shown to be retained – sorry that is not acceptable – HCS was promised that once the Link Road is open these lights would be disconnected.

In Newmarket St./Blue School St. bus stops will be on both sides and there will be a wide grassed central reservation, north of Maylords, allowing buses to undertake a U turn. This will require careful landscaping. The **Link Road with five sets of traffic lights** is a complex design, with a **shared pedestrian/cycle path** on the north side, adjacent to the road, and will cater for pedestrians and cyclists in both directions!

The **transport interchange**, in front of the station, appears to have an illogical layout and apparently has been the subject of much discussion which is still on going. There is reference to the continuing use of the country bus station, behind the old Odeon, remaining. Whilst the idea of one major interchange might sound appealing, the existing use of several might well serve Herefordians better, including facilities at St.Peter's Square and Tesco's. However there is no reference to coach parking for visitors to the Cathedral.

Highway design is a complex issue and HCS is confident the City will look much better in three year's time, however some of the detail doesn't appear to run with the latest approaches. We hope the highlighted items above will be reconsidered.

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## MEETINGS

### 16th April 2015 – Farrell Review, One year on.

Charles Champion of John Thompson and Partners joined the meeting to talk about their community planning work see page 3 and a message of support was received from Max Farrell, the lead on the on-going work of the Farrell Review. Many new organisations are setting up to promote the importance of PLACE including the Place Alliance of which HCS is now a member. This page refers to HCS aspirations for an Urban Room and Design Review Panel.

### 21st May 2015 – Property values in Hereford

Joanne Cobb, local estate agent, talked enthusiastically about her experiences in the local property market. Comparisons with other English areas highlighted the inaccuracy of the often quoted percentage increases of residential properties. With London experiencing huge growth Herefordshire prices are back at their 2005 levels.

### 18th June 2015 – 70th celebration of VE Day in Hereford

Derek Foxtan entertained members with a fascinating set of photos that he retrieved from old negatives, having digitally improved them. These were taken by Tony Williams, a part time photographer who supplied pictures for the Hereford Bulletin and Citizen. Some familiar places and some long forgotten, everyone looking out for a past relative in the crowds celebrating VE Day in High Town!



Possible Urban Room?

## YOUR OPINIONS

Following consultations with members, there appears to be a general view that our activities might be even more popular if we have more outside visits especially in the summer months.

Your committee go along with this idea but innovative proposals, such as a drawing day out in the City, do require a bit of organisation. We would much like to see some more help from members for just one meeting or visit perhaps. If you are inspired by a visit to the underground drainage systems – why not organise the visit? If you like tree lined streets then how about a walk looking at good and bad examples.



Drink and Draw Blackburn



### STOP PRESS New University

Latest news from NMITE, their new name, is all positive with fundraising having gone well, academia and industry enthusiastic and with first students on the ground in 775 days' time!

### Butter Market

At last! A refurbishment by Darren Sockett - "We have a great vision for the Butter Market which will be a source of new opportunities and a great destination for shoppers." The Butter Market, which currently offers fresh produce as well as other traditional retail stalls, will be extended to offer a more diverse range of products and services; becoming a hub for small business start-ups and education. Work is due to start soon.

### Tom Watters writes

about the allocation of redevelopment land. Trying to make some sense of the Local Plan I see little logic in the choice of the preferred areas for development.

The Three Elms site is listed as one but it is well away from the centre of the City, and has large traffic implications. Surely areas of South Wye, out to the link road to Rotherwas, are infinitely more suitable with a railway line running through it.

Railways brought prosperity to many towns in the nineteenth century and now we should be relooking at tram and light rail options with frequent stops.

## URBAN ROOM PROGRESS

Our enthusiasm for establishing an urban room in Hereford is building, with endorsement from the Hereford City Council and other potential partners. It needs to be located centrally and to be accessible. We await news on the future of the Butter Market and the Library and there was a suggestion we should take an asset transfer on the Town Hall! This could be exciting but daunting, trying to find users for parts of the building surplus to our needs. Members interested in being involved in developing our ideas should contact us.

Our illustrations show activities in two urban rooms – one in Belfast [www.placeni.org](http://www.placeni.org) and one in Blackburn [www.blackburnisopen.co.uk](http://www.blackburnisopen.co.uk); both inspiring their communities to become involved and interested in their local environment. In Belfast it is Open House, similar to our Heritage Open Day that runs in England, with the Urban Room logically being the base from which the project is managed. In Blackburn the activity is a little removed from the built environment, but it is inspiring locals to become involved and draw their city – the advertisement to Drink and Draw is the hook to get the locals into the centre!

Next quarter we will print a beautiful little pencil sketch of the Blackburn skyline.

### Drink and Draw

If you've ever fancied life drawing but were too intimidated to give it a go Drink & Draw is part of Blackburnisopen. The perfect introduction to get the locals involved in a light hearted, relaxed and fun way prior to drawing real buildings.

### Join Us

If you want to influence the future of the City and enjoy lectures and discussions about the built environment, old and new, JOIN US - your membership fee covers printing and distribution of our magazine, meeting expenses and web site and publicity costs. It does not cover members' time - all of which is freely given.

**Subscription: Single £15 pa. / two memberships at the same address £25 pa.** Questions?

☎ 01981 580002  
🌐 [chair@herefordcivicsociety.org.uk](mailto:chair@herefordcivicsociety.org.uk)

### Join By Cash

Pay at one of our meetings.

### Join By Cheque

Complete the form below, cut along the dotted line and return to:  
David Fowler, Stable Cottage, Kingsthorpe, Hereford HR2 8AJ

**Full name (please print):**

**Address:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

### Forthcoming Events

*All meetings at the Kindle Centre, by ASDA, Belmont, Hereford HR2 7JE.  
7.00pm refreshments for a 7.30pm start*

#### Saturday 18th July 2015

PLACE Study Trip Mid Wales tour – few places left

#### Thursday 17th September 2015

Politics - are they delivering? The new administration explains

#### Thursday 15th October 2015

Hereford Tomorrow (and AGM)  
Discussion on HCS proposals for a county wide eco city and more.

### HCS Contact Details

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### Disclaimer

The views expressed in the letters, reviews, news and features in this issue are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the members of Hereford Civic Society.