



This is a particularly “Alice Through the Looking Glass” article. **The Tories only invested in Hereford throughout the entirety of their strangle-hold on this county.**

Focussing solely on the Enterprise Zone in Hereford has **sucked strong local businesses out of accommodation elsewhere in the county** and increased the need for their employees to commute into the city.

Their overspending City Link Road and impossible to deliver Southern and Western road schemes have **eaten up nearly £30m which could and should have been spent repairing our roads.**

Since 2019 Tory central government has restricted the **Stronger Towns funds to**

be only spent in Hereford City and the supposed **Levelling-Up Fund ignored projects we proposed for Ross, Leominster and Ledbury** and only approved the bid centred entirely on the city.

The Independent-led coalition has -for the first time ever - **developed Economic Investment Plans for each of the market towns.** We have built a network of Talk Community hubs to enable bottom-up community-led action and have provided the funds to support these initiatives. We continue to deliver home care, education services, road , maintenance, and have invested in enhanced drainage and water management, footpath and lengthsman schemes for our rural areas.

Following the disastrous impact from 2015 onwards of the development driven Core Strategy, we have commenced a **major update of the county’s planning policy framework.** This will reduce the pressure on rural communities to take unwelcome development and will **increase the opportunities for small rural developments to include affordable housing and to contribute S106 developer monies** to improve local community infrastructure.

We have **delivered a 5 year housing land supply in every year we have been in office** – protecting all communities – and especially rural ones – from predatory and unplanned development. **We have championed and defended Neighbourhood Planning** to ensure rural and village communities have hyper-local planning policies which meet their particular needs and special circumstances.

We have **continued to invest in rural broadband and fibre to the premises programmes** to increase internet connectivity and to enable small and micro-businesses to grow and to thrive.

We have maintained access to council services in all of our market towns to ensure that people living in rural areas don’t have far to travel to reach the help and support that they need. We have **invested in the county’s important leisure and tourism economy** and have supported the development of a county-wide Destination Business Improvement District to provide the strategic marketing and support services that all businesses serving the visitor economy need but would struggle to buy for themselves.

Our Independent coalition goes out of the way to represent every part of Herefordshire – **we don’t have party member interests to satisfy or business and land-owner donors pulling our strings.** We’re doing right by Herefordshire in difficult times and with the funds available. In doing so, we are working with the strengths and idiosyncrasies of the county. **Herefordshire is and always will be about recognising and rejoicing in the rural.**



The Conservatives published their own 'newspaper' full of misleading nonsense. For a full explanation of why their claims are such utter rubbish, go to the Myth Busting page. Meanwhile here are the headlines...



Planters were paid for out of a covid grant to improve the city centre, not from your council tax.

The 'bypass' was a Conservative waste of money. It would have encouraged more traffic at a time when we need to find ways to encourage less. Plus it would still take another 10 years to do and cost another £250 million+

Conservatives raised council tax by the full amount every year they were in power. Plus inflation was lower then.

Government directed all councils to reorganise bin collections with a greater emphasis on recycling. The public were consulted on the plans and a majority agreed with the new arrangements



Money spent on Hereford city centre is aimed at actually solving the cities transport problems, which these roads schemes never would.



Conservatives approved a massive increase in poultry farming without thinking of the effect of phosphates on our rivers. Now they try to blame us!

The new cycle lane was not our 'vanity project'. It was actually part of a scheme designed by the Conservatives. Costs went up because their design needed improvement.

Our Children's services have been in trouble since long before the Coalition took over. The headline cases date back to when the Conservatives ran the council. Funding has been under pressure for over 10 years.

The reason our rivers are so polluted is because Thatcher sold off our water to companies who want profit over nature. The Government still refuses to take the pollution of our rivers seriously, letting these companies discharge raw sewerage into our rivers.



Rural areas are undervalued by Government. It is they who spend billions on HS2 rather than local bus services. Not your council

Basically every story in their 'newspaper' is a total misrepresentation of the truth. Even the 'potholes have potholes' story conveniently forgets to mention that the government has slashed the money available to sort out roads while the cost of materials has gone up.

Find out more about Independents for Herefordshire on our website: www.i4H.org.uk