

Update on Permanent Flood Defences

The development for permanent flood defences at Beales Corner continues on schedule for completion by Autumn 2024. As previously reported the funding is ringfenced and drawings are currently being finalised prior to a further public consultation before the plans are due to be submitted to Wyre Forest District Council for planning permission this summer. It is understood that all statutory reports and third party consultations have now been concluded.



Rebecca Pow, Minister for Floods, visited Beales Corner in February with County Cllr Ian Hardiman and colleagues from Worcestershire County Council

Schools Tree Planting, Netherton Lane Field, Blackstone

The second phase of tree-planting has been completed. Ian invited High School students to assist with tree-planting on 27th January and on Wednesday 16th



7,500 trees have been planted so far on the Wribbenhall site

February, pupils from the Primary School to help the County Council's officers with planting. The Project is ultimately for 8,000 trees but so far

approximately 7,500 have now been planted and the balance will likely be planted in the Autumn.

The Wribbenhall Project is part of

the County Council's undertaking to plant 150,000 trees across Worcestershire; particularly for this to be underway with regard to The Queen's Jubilee occurring this year.

Low Habberley: Bollards Installation

To prevent vehicle parking on the grass verge either side of the entrance to Low Habberley Farm, the County Highways Engineer accepted the Parish Council's request for the installation of bollards. The funding for which would be met jointly by the County Council and County Cllr Ian Hardiman's devolved Highways Fund with no cost implications for the Parish Council.

Bulbs and shrubs will be planted to help restore the appearance of this verge which had become quite damaged by vehicle parking.



Bollards have been installed by Low Habberley Farm to protect the verge

Inflation is back

Relief for households with energy bills



After years of low inflation, we are now seeing prices rise up to three times as quickly as we are used to.

This is not just the UK. Prices are rising across Europe and the US – in some cases faster. And the cause? Energy prices.

As the world economy recovers from the pandemic, and we move away from coal, gas prices have shot up. And that has a knock on effect across prices.

The government will help households in three ways.

- 1 All households will get a £200 loan** to tackle the unexpected hike in fuel bills. This will be repayable at £40 a year for the following 5 years
- 2 £150 non-repayable grant.** if you are in council tax band A to D
- 3 The government has made available £144 million** to local councils to help with people's fuel bills. At the discretion of local councils, this money will be available for other hard hit households.

A456 Bewdley Bypass/Stourport Road

Keeping the Traffic Moving

Later this year, County Highways will be carrying out **improvement works to the traffic lights junction to reduce congestion here.** They intend widening the carriageway on all three approaches so that through traffic and turning traffic do not hinder each other when queuing at the signals.

They will also look to improve the phasing of the signals which will lead to further efficiencies.

The County Council has approved its £373 million net revenue budget

Over 70% of the budget will be spent on vulnerable adults and vulnerable children.

- **You tell us that the most important issues that you want us to invest in are highways related.**
 - ✓ additional £12 million each year for the next 3 years on road resurfacing.
 - ✓ a further £4 million for the next 3 years on pavement resurfacing.
 - ✓ £500,000 for the next 3 years to fund small scale schemes such as creating new pelican and zebra crossings.
 - ✓ additional £1 million for drainage including small schemes to support flood alleviation.
 - ✓ allocation of £22,500 per year for the next 3 years to spend on capital local highways schemes within their area.
- **Councillors will receive an allocation of £10,000 Divisional Funding per annum to support projects and community organisations.**
- **We are yet again keeping Council Tax increases under control and are one of the lowest county councils in the country. On a Band D property this will be an increase of £52.95, effectively £1 per week.**



Good team work ensures that jobs are actioned quickly for residents

Team Work Gets the Job Done

Paul and John regularly liaise with Ian, to escalate works for Highways. Prompt reporting of the manhole deterioration on Habberley Road enabled Ian to get Severn Trent Water to fix it, and the same for the pothole at the junction of Meadow rise with Trimpley Lane.

Localism Update

Transfer to Town / Parish Councils

Cllr Paul Harrison reports that Bewdley Town Council has received the freehold to Borough House (and has relinquished the lease on 25A Load Street) and to Riverside North Park.



Discussions continue on the transfer of assets for the benefit of Council Tax payers

Bewdley Town Council is **still awaiting the transfer of the Public Toilets**. Taking on these services is affecting the Town's Council Tax and the Town Council is still feeling its way in operating these facilities.

Our **rural parishes are worried about Wyre Forest District Council withdrawing grants for litter collection and bin emptying**, whilst considering not carrying out these duties which are a statutory duty on the District.

Low Habberley - Road Drainage Issues

For some time there have been problems when rain occurs as the Gullies and Drainage system seem not to cope properly. Ian referred this to the Highways Engineer who arranged for technical investigation, which **found that the pipework beneath the road is not functioning correctly**.

Ian recently enquired and received assurance County Highways will attend to this as soon as possible.

Platinum Jubilee Street Parties

Street parties, involving road closures, are planned for Wassell Drive and Meadow Rise on Sunday 5th June. Bewdley Town Council is also planning a party for The Queen Elizabeth II Gardens on that afternoon.

Your Conservative team for **Wribbenhall and Upper Arley**



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