

INFORMATION that might be of interest to RESIDENTS:

Winter of Wellbeing Grant (bring the 'wow' factor to your community)

Grant funding is available as part of the Household Support Fund (HSF) to community hubs and organisations across Herefordshire to create a 'Winter of Wellbeing' for families, that are most in need, to access in their local community.

We invite you to open up your facilities on weekday evenings and weekends to offer vulnerable families in the community the opportunity to go somewhere that provides, a hot drink or a hot meal, activities, information and guidance which will support families in getting through the winter months. If you are able to open your doors for one day during February half term this could make a big difference to families in need.

*For more information, grant criteria, and to apply, please visit our website:
<https://www.talkcommunitydirectory.org/wowgrant/>*

Could a mobile research unit benefit communities? (Time to have your say)

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Research Consortium (HWRC) wants to find out if using a mobile research unit, bus or van would be of benefit to patients, carers, families, and the wider community.

The research vehicle (HaRV for short) could be used to take research studies into communities and rural areas, saving people time and money attending studies which would normally be in a hospital or clinical setting.

If you'd like to make suggestions on how a mobile research vehicle should be designed and used, what types of studies it would be suitable for it, and where it should visit, [Take the Health Research Vehicle Survey now](#).

The survey will close on **Thursday 16 February**.



VOTER ID

You may be aware that the Electoral Commission recently launched its **Voter ID public awareness campaign**. Voters will need to show photo ID when voting at polling stations from May 2023. You can [read more on the council website](#) – please share within your communities to help make sure our residents don't miss the chance to vote.

Reporting Highway and Public Realm defects and issues

If you need to report defects and issues on highways or the public realm, please use the [council website customer services webpage](#) or, if urgent, please call 01432 261800. You can also report issues on a mobile device using the [Reporting app](#).



Reporting defects through these channels is the fastest route. Please **do not report defects by email** or leave answerphone messages on mobiles as this can delay our response.

***** IMPORTANT NEWS FOR RESIDENTS & PARISH COUNCILLORS *****

The WYE VALLEY AONB UNIT has its own PLANNING OFFICER – he started on 1st February!

Residents and parish councillors are often not aware that my role and time involves attending a wide range of meetings in the parishes, across Herefordshire and in the wider Wye Valley area because I continue to fight hard and shout loud for rural issues and especially those that affect Kerne Bridge. Thankfully, my efforts have been rewarded!

Funding from Herefordshire Council has enabled the Wye Valley AONB (WVAONB) and Malvern Hills AONB Units to share a full-time planning officer – Josh Bailey - will be sited at the WVAONB Unit office's in Monmouth.

Before and whilst I was the Vice Chair for the Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee, for more than two years, I lobbied hard for the WVAONB Unit to have its own planning officer in all relevant meetings within the HC, WVAONB JAC and when sitting on National Landscape meetings.

The WVAONB Unit is not a statutory consultee on planning applications and Andrew Blake, the Manager of the WVAONB has to comment on applications (which are brought to his attention) on top of his other duties. For major applications within the WVAONB, the WVAONB Unit commissioned services from a planning officer from an outside county council.

Having a dedicated planning officer for AONB areas and who is based in the WVAONB is great news! He will enable residents, parish councils, ward members and the WVAONB Unit articulate key issues in planning applications in the Wye Valley and will help us navigate/develop key policies ... building on current citizen scientist projects: the Kerne Bridge Dark Skies and Pollution in the River Wye to name two.

Please welcome Josh Bailey to his new role.

Goodrich & Welsh Bicknor Parish (G&WB)

- **Correspondence query:** *a) change of road markings @ junction near Cross Keys with no temporary notification of change (actioned by Parish Clerk after parish council meeting); b) bare soil/run-off from farmland into River Wye (now an EA incident); c) map of local walks in parish (Ward member has given one to Hostellerie and PROW Parish Councillor considering other sites for a map of walks as parish noticeboard does not have adequate space)*

- **Outstanding:**
 - **S106 funds due** – still waiting for agreement to be signed. The ward member continues to ask questions on ‘why the agreement wasn’t signed and ‘what is the delay in doing so’. The parish clerk is included in all communications on this.
 - **Speeding traffic** - TRO 77/85 (BBLP) - Goodrich village has been recommended by the ward member to Highways Team for consideration in the ‘20 is plenty’ roll-out

Walford Parish (WPC)

- **Correspondence from residents:** a) **riparian ditches and drainage issues** - Environmental Health Officers met the ward member and two local residents to discuss three main issues (1. continuous smelly discharge into riparian ditch, 2. faulty septic tank and 3. manure heap which are leaching and pooling foul water on the highway); b) **signage to Leys Hill** on side of B4324 is missing/damaged; c) **pavement from Walford Timber to Kerne Bridge** to allow safe passage for those unable to walk the Wye Valley walk track – this has been added to the S106 list for the parish by the ward member
- **Outstanding:**
 - Highways:
 - **HH Memorial Project** – Howle Hill Nursery have not responded to parish council letters to meet or remove cars from the area to allow residents to carry out necessary landscaping and clearing before the bird nesting season starts; the ward member along with two parish councillors have met a local contractor for a request to scrape and puncture the ‘tarmac’ for landscaping purposes to commence.
 - **Speeding traffic** – Walford village has been recommended by the ward member to Highways Team for consideration in the ‘20 is plenty’ roll-out
 - **Leys Hill Junction** – this is on top of the S106 spending list for the parish. A letter from Herefordshire Council (HC) is currently with the Secretary of State to ask that rural wards are legislated as ‘rural’ which would enable wards like Kerne Bridge to obtain much needed monies from accumulated and unspent S106 funds in HC’s central pot. Sadly, one Herefordshire MP is not supporting this request.
 - **WA50** – this matter currently sits with planning and PROW Team which now sits within HC
 - **Pavements:** the pavement from the Mill Race to Church is widened and a new pavement from Walford Timber to Kerne Bridge. The ward member has put these on the S106 list for the parish but Leys Hill junction takes precedence
 - **Dismantled Railway Line/Access to school** – The ward member has passed the Walford Links report to the Supercycle Highway Team which is looking at areas to invest funds - recently received from central government <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2530/rural-cycling-map>

- Environmental Health
 - **Foul water into riparian ditch/drain** (HH) - *see comment in correspondence*
 - **Foul water from septic tank on to highway** (HH) - *see comment in correspondence*
- Member of the **Flooding Sub-Group** (linked to the Parish Council's Safety & Environmental Working Group) and Local Plan Consultation Group
- Member of the Howle Hill Memorial Project

Whitchurch and Ganarew Parish

- **Correspondence with/from residents:** *a) residents living on BOATs are not satisfied with responses from HC & BBLP Officers, MP & his case workers, ward member and parish council. They do not feel heard, listened to or their views taken seriously despite receiving numerous e-mails, telephone conversations with the aforementioned. Unfortunately, e-mails received over the past week have been disrespectful to the role of the MP and the ward member. Residents' views **are** taken seriously. All communications from the MP and the ward member come from Senior Officers on current legislation and legislative policy.*

NOTE TO RESIDENTS WHO LIVE ON A BOAT: *The parish council is writing the 'poor state of BOATs' in all its representations on planning applications that are sited on a BOAT. This month and despite objections from a HC Landscape Officer and the parish council, I was not able to take a planning application on a BOAT because there were NO representations from local residents. This is another route where residents can make their views known about the state of the BOAT and help parish council and elected members advocate on their behalf.*

- **Outstanding:**
 - **Speeding traffic** – *Whitchurch village has been recommended by the ward member to Highways Team for consideration in the '20 is plenty' roll-out*
 - **The poor condition of ALL the BOATs on the Doward** – *the ward member has been liaising with the parish council chair and clerk, MP Caseworkers, Cabinet member for Highways & Transport (H&T) and Senior Management of H&T. The Highways Engineer and (recently recruited) PROW Officer have undertaken a 'walk about' on every BOAT in the parish. A statement and letter from HC is expected to be published imminently (see above statement)*
 - **The persistent parking issues in Whitchurch** – *this matter is currently sits with parish council and officers re: enforcement*
 - **Acrid smell from Stoney Hill Industrial Estate** – *the ward member has not received any updates from Environmental Health Officers*

Across the Three Parishes. My full report is published on www.wagpc.org.uk - click on the link to 'Ward Councillor'

- Having continued conversations/correspondence with BBLP, Highways and Transport, and Highways England re: flooding, drains, potholes, road surfacing and footpaths/bridleways across the ward + continuing to walk and cycle across the three Parishes.
- Commenting on every planning application in the Parish and investigating those where the Parish Council and/or residents have expressed concerns
- Being a Facilitator/Advocate for parish residents/Clerks/Parish Councillors and raising/following through issues to the appropriate Officers in Herefordshire Council
- Researching Dark Skies and light pollution legislation; lobbying for a Rural Strategy for Herefordshire, calling for MPs and central govt. to revise the Land Drainage Act to include ecological impacts and reviewing the Planning Inspectorate Appeal Decisions across AONB

Herefordshire Council (HC): Leaders April 2022 Newsletter (see attached)

1. E-Committee, e-Council and e-Cabinet meetings are working well and will continue – hopefully as a hybrid - for the foreseeable future. My responsibilities include: corporate parenting; Planning & Regulatory Committee, Environment & Sustainability Scrutiny Committee, Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Management Board and Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee;
 2. My ward work includes 'across three parishes' and specific foci including: Rural proofing Herefordshire Council's contracts and services, Drainage and Planning, the Kerne Bridge Dark Skies Project and Local Democracy/Political Literacy Project
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