

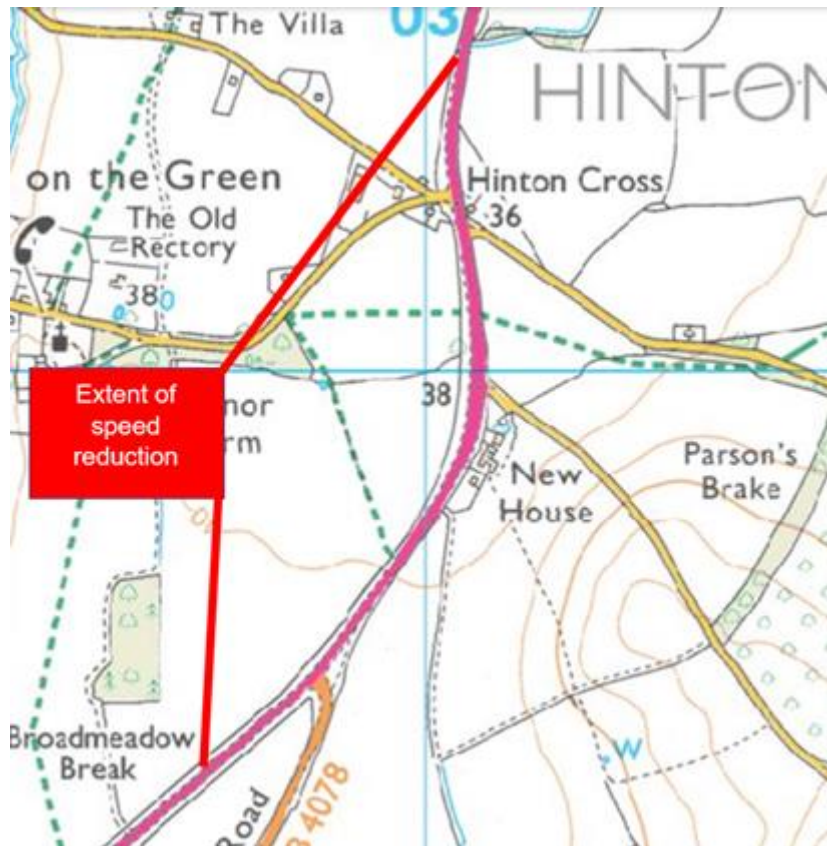
Charlton Cllr ELIZABETH EYRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT March 2022

Delays on A44/A46, Budget, What WCC is doing about Climate Emergency, use of Drones re Bridges.

A46 Teddington Hands roundabout electrical work 20 February 2023 to 7 April 2023 Monday to Friday overnight when traffic volumes are lower

between 9 pm and 6 am. National Highways will be carrying out electrical lighting works on the A46 Teddington Hands roundabout as part of its safety improvement scheme: replacing the street lighting cables on the roundabout to help mitigate the likelihood of any outages and other cable and electrical faults at this location., To carry out our work safely, work will be carried out under two phases: Phase 1 - 20 February to 20 March 2023 - full closure of the A46 between Aston Cross and Teddington Hands, including three-way temporary traffic lights on A345 and B4077. Phase 2 - 21 March to 6 April 2023 - Four-way temporary traffic lights on Teddington Hands roundabout and a full closure of Crashmore Lane and two-way temporary traffic lights on the A435.

A46 improvement at Hinton Cross –National Highways (NH) has made great progress with the speed limit reduction to cover the A46 between the junctions at Hinton Cross and Sedgeberrow North to introduce a lower 40mph limit. They are planning work to start shortly to install 40pmh signs and repeaters mounted on posts. They are also installing 40mph roundels on a red road surface and dragons' teeth road markings at the gateway to the speed restriction to encourage adherence to the lower speed limit. They will monitor speeds during the next 18 months, as well as collision data to understand if the speed reduction has reduced the likelihood of incidents in this area intending to make the 40mph speed limit permanent. See the plan below.



They are also working closely with the sign manufacturer to develop the details for the installation of a Vehicle Activated sign north of Hinton Cross to alert southbound drivers of vehicles waiting to join the A46 at the approaching junction. They are working through complex constraints such as access to sufficient power and identifying the safest position to locate the sign. We're also liaising with them to agree on the optimum timeline for delivery and will provide you with more details on this once these have been agreed upon. As soon as they have finalised the details and dates for the work to install the signs and road markings, they will update me. We are currently planning the work to take around two weeks and are looking to minimise the disruption by working at night as much as possible.

For completeness, you are now aware of Severn Trent's replacement of the mains from Salters Lane, Fladbury down to Greenhill over the next 2 years until 2025 so know there could be delays on the A44, and understand how to check with one network. I think locally you are advised by Severn Trent too. Severn Trent work on Main Sewer A44 from Salters Lane to Tesco

Budget 2023: Worcestershire County Council approved its budget plans at a meeting in County Hall in February. Its share, the largest, which pays for

education, social care, and transport, will rise to £1,465.78 for band D households – an increase of £69 on last year. The cost of policing is also set to rise with the average household asked to pay an extra £15 in the next year with the region’s fire service requesting an extra £5 from residents to cover its costs.

Worcestershire County Council will invest over £268 million to ensure the most vulnerable people in the county receive the care and support they need. It ensures care is provided for those who need it most, assisting them in living their best life and helping them to maintain the highest level of independence. It will be commissioning services to best meet the needs of residents, whether it’s in their own homes, at a day centre, or at a residential /nursing care home. The investment also ensures the County Council can continue to offer support in several areas including discharge from the hospital, the elderly, those with physical or mental health disabilities, and people who have learning disabilities, autism, and dementia. The Council also supports those carers in the community who may be supporting a family member or friend. The budget has been set to help meet the current pressures and level of demand in this area, which increases by approximately 4 percent each year, and the care needs which are becoming increasingly complex. The rising demand for health and social care post-COVID-19 is well-reported and exceeds previous forecasts. This coupled with increasing levels of inflation for businesses has also driven up the cost of care, resulting in significant pressure on the Council’s financial position which will continue into 2023/24.

Climate Emergency: a lot of residents are asking what the County Council is doing in respect of climate challenges. The County Council has a long history of action on climate change and is not acting alone – many organisations across the county, the UK, and beyond are acting too. The council has set a target to be carbon neutral by 2050 and is working in partnership to achieve the Worcestershire LEP Energy Strategy aim of halving the county’s carbon emissions by 2030. The council has cut its absolute carbon emissions by 41% and reduced its net carbon emissions by 47% since 2009/10. Countywide carbon emissions have fallen by 42% since 2005. The Council’s Net Zero Carbon plan is the latest and most ambitious in a series of carbon management plans implemented by the Council over the last 20 years.

The challenge: Worcestershire County Council declared a climate emergency in July 2021. Under the council’s Sustainability Policy, the council has committed to not only reducing their operational carbon footprint but also to supporting businesses and other Worcestershire organisations to improve their

environmental performance too. To enable decarbonisation, a business first needs to understand its current carbon emissions. This can often seem like a large, complex, and time-consuming task, with no way of knowing how your business is performing against similar companies.

One solution: Worcestershire County Council partnered with Climax Community to provide free access to their Decarbonisation Portal - Climate Essentials. The portal allows organisations and businesses to collate and analyse data regarding energy, transport, waste, and supply chain emissions. It further helps them set specific decarbonisation goals based on such data, generates personalised reports, and links businesses to further expert guidance. For one year Worcestershire businesses can use the platform to measure, track and reduce their carbon emissions. Climate Essentials allows for cross-sector collaboration, fills data gaps, enables knowledge sharing, and facilitates a standardised method of carbon accounting. This creates a data pool to inform the implementation of net-zero strategies across Worcestershire. The data is aggregated to ensure the council can assess needs and identify industry hotspots through the business's operational data, provided by small to medium-sized enterprises in their area. Through the analytics platform, the reduction pledges that businesses are making are highlighted, helping to both identify a truly regional pathway to net-zero, and also emphasise the kinds of actions that businesses want to implement. These insights are then used to develop local initiatives, funding and grants, and future climate and business support policies. Given the ever-changing customer and regulatory landscape surrounding climate action, the portal allows businesses to get ahead of the curve and build a resilient and informed sustainability plan.

The impact: WCC is already working with a range of businesses and organisations in the area who have been able to measure and understand the reduction pathway of their operational carbon emissions. Businesses have found that the portal has made their carbon reduction journey much simpler. Jo Hughes from Avensys UK Ltd has said: "We have been using Climate Essentials for the last few months and found it easy to use and time-saving for calculating emissions across our scopes. The visual charts are helpful for us to communicate our progress to all stakeholders, as well as manage our reduction strategies for future improvements."

Lessons learned: Many businesses are enthusiastic but struggle with the implementation of certain recommendations - providing them with insights and support is deeply important. Some businesses have expressed a desire to learn from their peers about how other businesses have overcome certain

challenges. In response, we will be implementing peer learning sessions in the next iteration of the project.

How is the new approach being sustained? Worcestershire County Council is extending the rollout of this scheme due to the positive engagement seen from businesses and the ability to support these businesses on their pathway to decarbonisation.

Contact: Heather Dawes, Programme Manager – Sustainability, sustainability@worcestershire.gov.uk

A second initiative: Working in partnership, Worcestershire County Council, Warwickshire County Council, and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council collaborated on a heating system replacement programme following a successful bid for £325,000 from National Energy Action's Warm and Healthy Homes Fund. Each authority's public health or housing services also provided match funding and Worcestershire County Council project and contract managed the scheme. The two-year project aimed to tackle fuel poverty and support residents to keep warm and well.

The challenge: The project was aimed at privately owned households where a member of the household had a diagnosed long-term health condition made worse by living in a cold home. To be eligible the householder needed to be in receipt of means-tested benefits or have a low income (under £16,010) with a broken, or old and inefficient, heating system. The first point of contact with households was the local energy charity Act on Energy's energy advisor, who completed initial eligibility assessments over the telephone. If a householder was deemed eligible, a follow-up home visit to collect evidence of eligibility was arranged. This home visit helped to identify other issues which needed to be addressed before installation, such as hoarding, pets, and additional support requirements. The energy advisor also completed a standardised health questionnaire with the householder. All installations were completed by delivery partner PH Jones (part of British Gas). Most installations were gas boilers with a smaller number of oil boilers and electric night storage heaters. Carbon monoxide detectors were installed where required.

The impact: Across the whole project area, 130 heating systems were installed across the three project areas. Energy Performance Certificates were completed before and after installations to help evaluate the benefit of the project and its contribution towards the national fuel poverty strategy

aims. Installation of new heating systems moved households out of the lowest energy efficiency rating band (no properties now have a G rating). There was an increase of 75 percent in the number of properties in the EPC band C and an anticipated average saving of £316 per household per annum because of the new heating. Some households can be expected to save considerably more. In some instances, the project removed heating systems that were over 40 years old and needed additional work, such as asbestos removal, to complete the job. The contractor was able to provide adaptations to improve accessibility to the new system and ensure it met residents' needs. Adaptations included raising Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRVs) to make them easier to reach and installing wireless programmers for less mobile residents unable to get to the boiler to alter controls.

Worcestershire County Council's Public Health team's assessment of the expected benefits could be realised by investing in a project such as this. They used a measurement called 'Quality Adjusted Life Years' (QALY), which indicates the benefits of an intervention. For a project to be cost-effective for the benefit it returns, the cost per QALY should be less than £20,000. This project had a cost per QALY of £17,300 using conservative estimations. Assuming the intervention solves 100 percent of the cold home problem, the maximum benefits realisable over 1-5 years were estimated to be £295,000 to health and care services, compared to an initial outlay of £75,000.

Lessons learned

- Many residents with long-term health conditions had multiple health conditions affecting both physical and mental health.
- It is important that all contractors provide a service suitable for vulnerable households and can be adapted to customer needs. Some residents will require 'handholding' through phone calls and visits and will require more advisor time.
- Considerable benefit was gained from the project, not only for the households receiving the measures but in building understanding within the project team to deliver similar projects going forward.
- Additional benefits could be seen from these schemes such as a reduction in health and social care demand
- Further work is required with health service teams to determine an appropriate data collection/ data sharing protocol to evaluate the impact on the number of GP/hospital visits.

Contact: Heather Dawes, Programme Manager – Sustainability, sustainability@worcestershire.gov.uk

Further resources on Worcestershire’s website [National Energy Action's full report, Warmer Worcestershire | Worcestershire County Council and Sustainability and carbon reduction and climate action timeline | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Highways: Drones, fitted with cameras, are being trialed by the county council, in partnership with contractors Jacobs and Ringway, to inspect bridge structures in "better, safer, more cost-effective, and recordable ways." The drones have a dedicated professional pilot, whilst the camera is controlled by a bridge inspector to enable them to focus on any areas of interest. The first bridge inspection of its kind took place this month at Mildenham Canal Bridge, Claines. The council says that risk is minimised by using drones in areas where access would usually be very difficult to reach, and the inspection can be carried out effectively. The information that is collected could help improve the historic record of the structure, enabling changes to be identified more easily over time.

Avon Pollution Discussion –seems to have gone well – more information from the government – AM ASKING FOR AN ELECTRONIC COPY, Marc Liderall I am chasing for more information on how to read the data.

Local Charlton Matters

Worcestershire Draft Green Infrastructure Strategy – thank you for your input, all points I support and can promote.

W/22/01426/CU Roger Gurney sent some very helpful information back to Dan O’Sullivan – Dan no longer works for WCC. I have chased with Gareth Jones Development Control – Tony I think you may have to call in and have a site visit as I do not consider WCC Development Control may have correctly considered the local information supplied by Roger Gurney - Clerk

20 mph petition- I am very happy to present a petition to WCC in May if you have one that is specific as to the start and finish of the 20mph on all Charlton roads, a plan attached to the petition would help, and it is signed by residents signature, postcode house number or name and it is clear what they are signing. The procedure is for those presenting at the start of the meeting in May to speak for three minutes, or I present the petition. This goes to the Cabinet Member who responds to the parish.

Gravels on either side of under bridge – Parish to address

Build up under the bridge Enquiry 262 – If you recall BB advised there did not appear to be any safety defects as regards silt at Merry Brook. Following the Nov 21 visit, I was told the WCC engineer suggested the PC ask BB to push again for WCC to talk to the EA about consent to reprofile under the Bridge. I have seen statements that the necessary permissions would be sought but I am unclear as to who is doing this. Has the Parish council written to BB on this matter?

Enquiry 773 Charlton Cemetery Bridge to Jubilee Bridge - road cracking, barriers. DEC 2021 - Advisory raised for our Design and Build Team to assess the works required. **Chased 22/2/2023 – no new date yet per BB.**

Enquiry 776 Yew Tree Cottage on the Green to Cemetery – I have not seen any further correspondence on this matter. I never felt a site visit was necessary as we had a site visit, we looked at the paperwork, and my records were more accurate than those at County Hall. I am not getting support on this issue but I admit I have not been able to talk to Chris Davies.

Enquiry 777/1163 March 2022 The Bight Water leaking on road. I understand BB has involved Wychavon District Drainage Team. Wychavon has investigated and says a French drain installed by private landowner cant be pursued by WDC but can be WCC under the Highways Act. I think BB, has traced the land registry and wrote to the owners of the land requesting they take action to prevent water from draining onto the highway. Four plans showing The Bight through each epoch have been checked. 1846 – 1901 shows four wells. 1888 – 1915 and 1900 – 1949 both show seven wells. No springs are denoted and no drainage channels or ponds. Per Barry, the present day does not show any wells in the locality but I am not sure a current map would show wells. I know I saw one when David Lavender put the French drains across the road maybe 10 years ago. **A work order has been raised to clean/jet gullies in The Bight and surrounding roads.**

Enquiry 1159/60 – Charlton Road /Hollies – I understood contractors completed Dec 2023 but I note the following is on the enquiry system – a **road closure permit has been granted between 13th and 24th March and**

should be completed in one day during that period. Advanced signage should be displayed two weeks before.

Enquiry 3204 – Field Barn Lane – post patching surface dressing in spring, asked for the reconstruction of passing places on this section of the carriageway, to carriageway specification, as soon as possible.

Enquiry 259 Tree root problem Strand/ Green – Ryden lane was not included October 2022 work did not happen BB has advised there are no new plans or schedules at the moment. As soon as more is known BB will update.

I noted the Drainage Team's comments regarding the asbestos water pipe sent to the PC but it appeared most of the content in the pipes is concrete. Asbestos is only added as a long-lasting and durable strengthening material. It seems there is some research and a Government report regarding any health risks. I believe Barry sent it directly to you.

Footway, B4084, siding out Hampton to Brook Lane about 2700 metres. Next £5,000 was allocated from my budget to do this.