

I enclose my Herefordshire Councillor's report via email to save time at the meeting this evening. It will be good to see everyone in person after all the zoom meetings but I think the Parish Council has managed very well. County Council meeting are also no longer on zoom.

The Salwey Arms junction and Highways England

We have heard through correspondence between Bill Wiggin MP and HE that the latest studies on the junction are delayed and the results will not be known until late June. It sounds as though various options have been looked at including traffic lights but there is a mystery over the possible offer of land towards a roundabout. We look forward to hearing more from Richard Timothy, Network Manager who met me in March at the Salwey car park.

Unsuitable for heavy vehicles sign

Richard Timothy will be contacting me tomorrow afternoon on the phone to discuss our request for a sign on the A49 to deter HGVs from turning right into Wyson Lane and School Lane. There is a sign from Leominster but not from Ludlow. I hope he will be favourable but the question of cost may arise. I will let Karen know the outcome.

TRO Scheme Wyson Lane

Will Wilson from ADL Traffic contacted me again to confirm my support for the proposed extension of the 30mph Speed Limit and I responded with all the reasons we have discussed before. He also contacted the Parish Council. The Police have not raised any objection so this is a very positive sign. We will have to wait for a definite decision but I am feeling cautiously optimistic. This matter has been on our agenda since 2009 and I think it is now or never!

Parish Tour

Many thanks to Karen, Boris and Lee our Locality Steward for Tuesday's parish tour. It was a useful morning and it only rained as we were finishing. Several potholes were marked for repair including outside Otterhampton Brimfield and several gullies have been earmarked for jetting. We pointed out the damage to the bank in School Lane due to badger activity and this could be a major problem as we do not want the lane blocked if nothing is done. A public footpath BF1 near Manor Farm will have to be closed due to erosion and the Environment Agency may need to be involved. A number of drainage issues were looked at in Little Hereford and Lee has taken photos and there will be further investigation by Balfour Beatty. Lee warned that there is a huge backlog of drainage work in the county so any work has to be prioritised. I hope some of the potholes will be repaired and gullies jetted in the next few weeks but some issues are going to take longer. My thanks to Boris for listing all the defects and going the extra mile for us on so many occasions

Other local matters

The dog waste bin in Wyson Lane is being much utilised and I have heard favourable comments. I will be interested to hear Parish Council views on a second bin. We all appreciate the cost involved but it is addressing a very unpleasant and anti-social matter, frequently raised by residents. Leysters Parish Council have deferred a decision on a dog waste bin in their parish. Karen sent them all the information.

I look forward to the deployment of a SID on the Tenbury Road which will remind some drivers of their excessive speed around those dangerous bends.

There has been less litter about since the litter pick in April and I hope another one can be arranged in the autumn. Many thanks to residents who regularly collect cans and cartons on their walks which helps keep our villages looking attractive..

Covid, Roadmap and vaccinations

This week has seen hotels, cinemas, theatres, restaurants, museums and other indoor hospitality reopening at last, very welcome for thousands of businesses and the economy. The aim of the

roadmap is to be cautious but “ irreversible “ and unlocking too fast, too soon risks a resurgence of the virus. I have enjoyed a coffee inside in a local café this week and look forward to entering one of our local pubs later in the week. It is good to hear that The Roebuck reopens on Friday and we need to support our shops, pubs and cafes some of whom have helped us with takeouts through three necessary but damaging lockdowns.

The vaccination roll-out continues to go well and who would have thought a year ago that 36 million people would have received their first dose and over 20 million their second dose with the NHS inviting people in their mid-thirties to book their first jab with three different vaccines being effectively used in the UK. It is vitally important that people attend their second dose appointment. Regular rapid testing is now available to everyone and local outbreaks such as at a Herefordshire fruit farm are being actively managed.

Cases remain low in Herefordshire and the Leominster Testing Centre for people with possible symptoms in Broad Street car park will be replaced by a mobile testing unit that will be rotated between Leominster and Ross-on-Wye. Some increase in cases looks certain as society reopens, but hospital admissions remain low and the overall message is to keep to the current restrictions so that more reopening and larger gatherings can happen later on in the summer. I hope we can all enjoy some staycations too.

Mental Health Helpline

Herefordshire's 24/7 mental health helpline has changed to Freephone 0808 196 9127

It is available to people of all ages and provides support and signposting to anybody struggling with mental health problems. Mental health awareness week was last week with the theme being to connect with nature. Country walks and outside activities were encouraged as evidence shows that mental and physical health benefit as a result.

Police and Crime Commissioner

John Campion was re-elected on May 6th as West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner covering Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire. The PCC appoints the Chief Constable and has responsibility for police numbers and many aspects of local policing policy. Elsewhere on May 6th there were no local elections in Herefordshire but a number of parishes held Neighbourhood Plan referendums and there was a county council by election in Newton Farm ward Hereford. More signs of normal life.

John 01584 711 227