

Representing the parishes of Llangarron, Marstow, Sellack, Bridstow, Peterstow, Welsh Newton and Llanrothal

We have had a bit of weather recently. If any parish has had property impacted by flooding please make sure that the householder is aware of the support offered by Herefordshire Council in the event of a flood.

[Flood management – Herefordshire Council](#)

Please report flooding so the council can continue to build a store of knowledge and work to prevent flooding in the future. Please copy me in or send me the details and I can relay them.

Obviously flooding from a main river is very different from surface water flooding but in the end it all connects! There is also a link between flooding (high flows) and pollution so the more we can hold water in the landscape and soil in the fields the better.

The council are fully focussed on ensuring that our flooding strategy is fit for purpose and takes into account the impacts of climate change. This is a subject that requires a very co-ordinated approach from the council, Environment Agency, Natural England with engineering, ecological and legal inputs. It's complicated but we have got to get it right.

In a large county such as ours there is a critical role for parish councils in monitoring and maintaining drainage as well as making sure that residents are supported if there is a flooding event. Local knowledge and local resilience is incredibly important to reduce the impact of storms. When we have a severe weather warning for snow and ice we prepare – we grit the roads in advance – but when we have a severe weather warning for rainfall – even an amber warning – we don't even make sure the grids aren't blocked with leaves. I personally check the grids by my house but I can't do the whole village, if everyone did their bit imagine what a difference it would make.

There is a balance to be struck between wanting to move water as quickly as possible off the land and making sure that the river can cope with the flows.

Until fairly recently the return period for a 5.3m peak in Hereford was 8-9 years, most recently we have seen return periods of a few months. The rainfall is increasing in intensity but whereas it used to take 120mm of rainfall over a 24hr period to generate a 5.3m peak, it now takes about 43mm.

One of the most popular explanations for this is that the 'river needs dredging'. Again, there is a balance to be struck in a managed landscape. Left to its own devices the river would be fine, there would be blockages, changes of direction, meanders, ox bows but because it flows through land we want to use to grow food we don't want it to do that.

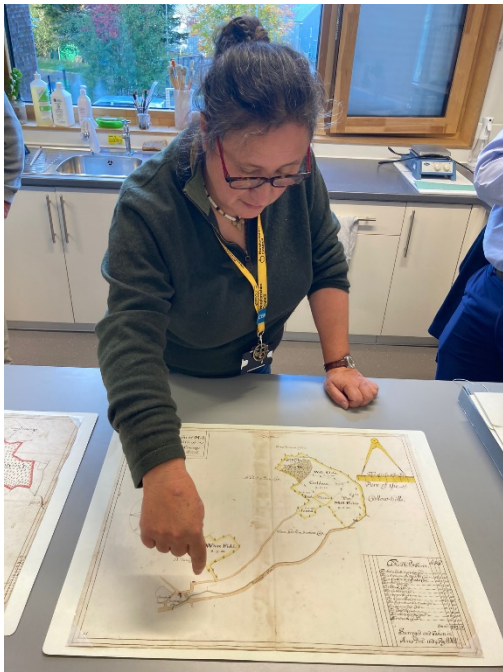
A recent project that I was involved with was trying to get the balance right. A section of the Lugg had become very congested with timber debris and very overgrown. As chair of the Lugg Internal



Drainage Board I seconded our ecologist and area engineer to work alongside the land owner as he undertook permitted works. I saw the completed works recently and am hopeful that the project will be of environmental benefit (baselines have been taken so this won't be a matter of opinion). It has certainly helped the flow at this critical point in the river and should reduce upstream flooding. The project has come to the attention of ADA (association of drainage authorities) and they came on a visit to look at what had been done. The landowner has the riparian right and responsibility but the river is highly protected so it was sensible

for him to make sure that every step was overseen by the agencies and the ecologist.

A visit to HARC



In 2014 the Council commissioned the new archive and record centre – the decision was taken to make our new records centre as sustainable as possible and so it was built to passivhaus standards. At the time this was a global first for such a facility. Visiting it ten years later we can see what a good decision that was. Not only are the running costs extremely low but the building provides a great environment for all of the documents and items stored there.

The on going work is to digitise as much of the collection as possible so it can be made available online.

There is also a fantastic space for the conservation work – here I am looking at a map of Mill Farm Welsh Newton that dates from the mid 17thc. (I am more or less pointing at where my house is – purely coincidental that this was the map being worked on when I visited!_)

The Budget.

The council is in the budget setting process (again) but the news this week has been all about the budget set in Westminster. This will have a degree of impact for the council as an employer (NI contributions and increase in national living wage) but we will have to wait for the local authority settlement to see the full picture.

As things stand we are anticipating a balanced budget in Herefordshire despite rising pressures in adult and children's social care.

Roadworks

The A40 works are on going.

There are planned works for Llangarron on the C1250 as part of the investment into roads being made by the council. I am working with the parish council to ensure that equal attention is given to the Llangrove to Whitchuch road which is getting very damaged by poor drainage. I am also asking the council to develop a strategy for works to BOATs where access to houses is needed – this is urgently needed in Llangrove.

Resurfacing Works – C1250 Ruxton Green *As a result of a £8 million investment by Herefordshire Council, a number of roads across the county will benefit from being resurfaced this year.*

As part of the £8 million investment, resurfacing works will be carried out on parts of the C1250 between Llangarron and Tuck Mill Lane, Ruxton (please refer to plan below) from Wednesday 20th November to (and including) Friday 22nd November 2024. The road will be closed between 0800hrs and 1700hrs each day.

The above length of road has been identified for such works following detailed and comprehensive surface and structural condition surveys that help us to objectively prioritise where we need to invest across Herefordshire's highway network.

The works will be taking place under a road closure and will involve the removal of the existing surface course before a new layer is laid. Where relevant, works will be undertaken to correct other highway defects including drainage. In order to protect the surface of the road once the work is complete, we have made utility companies aware of the work schedule and we will use our statutory powers to refuse all but emergency works and new connections in this area for the next 12 months.

A fully signed diversion route will be displayed locally.

We will do all we can to provide vehicular access to properties, although there may be times when we are not able to do so safely or there may be delays. You can get help and guidance from the dedicated marshals on site.

We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause you, but we will do all that we can to minimise the impact of our work whilst a new surface is laid.

The programme of work may change in certain circumstances, such as bad weather. This may happen at short notice and without further written notification. All changes will be highlighted on the advance warning signs, which you'll find onsite at the roadworks. For the most up to date information on roadworks across the county, please visit <https://one.network>.

If you have any questions about these works then please call us on 01432 260555.

I am working with Bridstow Parish council to reduce the speed limit on Cosy Lane/Hoarwithy Road and am hopeful to see this progress next year.

Second Parish Council Summit

Nearly a hundred Parish Councillors and Clerks attended the second Parish Summit at the Plough Lane Headquarters of Herefordshire Council. Topics included an update on the improvements in Children's services from the new director, Tina Russell.

The director of Adult Health care talked about a more preventative approach to supporting vulnerable older people to ensure they live well. The County has 54 businesses providing care support in the home and 86 care residential homes.

A presentation on Public Rights of Way covering 2,000 miles of PROW with 1,873 footpaths, 257 bridleways and 20 Byways open to Traffic. This year the council placed more funding in both the revenue and capital budgets and allocated 250K for grants to Parish Councils.

Prior to the meeting various councils services put on small displays with the relevant officers there to help answer any questions.

This is still a developing format and the next agenda will be set by the parishes themselves. It is so important to get the right mix of listening and talking!

That's all for now.

Elissa