

Public Realm Services Partnership

Parish Council newsletter

Issue 6 | December 2016

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Upcoming dates of notice

Annual Plan
Drop-in Sessions 14/12/16

Message from BBLP's Alasdair MacDonald



We hope you like the new look members newsletter. As ever, we aim to inform Ward Members of the current issues we are facing, and to bring you updates on ongoing programmes of work.

The Newsletter is one of several ways that we communicate with our Parish Councils, together with our quarterly briefings, and of course the weekly briefing notes from the Locality Stewards. If you have any suggestions for topics for future issues, please let the Knowledge Centre know.

Best wishes,

Alasdair

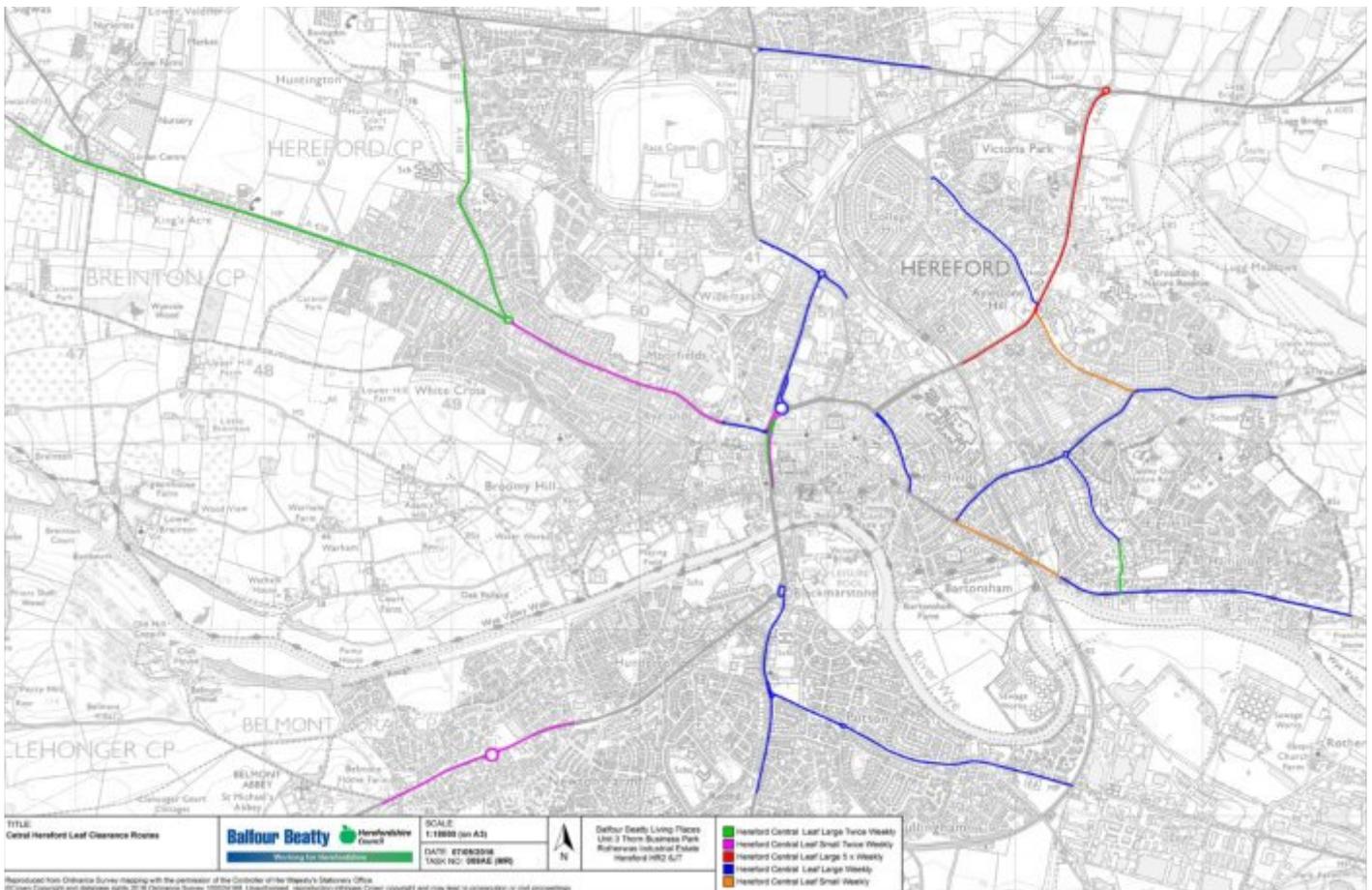


Leaf sweeping programme



We have started our leaf sweeping programme; routes have been planned to maximise efficiency and to minimise disruption to the public. We have consulted the drivers to utilise their local knowledge and expertise, and have taken delivery of two new sweepers, which are more manoeuvrable in urban and footpath areas to enable us to deliver an enhanced service.

We are also looking at our current environmental licences in our depots to allow more tipping locations; this will maximise sweeping time and minimise the time spent travelling to depots to offload the leaves.



Improving Operational Delivery



Our Operational Control Centre is now fully functional, and is driving efficiencies throughout our operational delivery. Our new fleet is tracked, which means that we can not only send the nearest gang to emergencies but also will lead to fuel efficiencies, and increased safety and security for those staff who are lone workers.

We are proud that on all of our Key Performance Indicators we are performing at a level above target.

Sandbag delivery



Stewards have begun delivering the empty sandbags to parishes. If your parish placed an order but is still waiting for delivery please let your locality steward know.

Winter maintenance



We have completed the 'dry runs' of the gritting routes in preparation for the winter season. Routes are checked for access and, where necessary, landowners will be contacted to trim hedges and overhanging trees. If the growth is excessive, the gritters may not be able to access those roads. We work with landowners wherever possible to ensure that access is not restricted.

We are also in the process of refilling our grit bins across the county. To date, we have filled over 1200, and we're aiming to complete the process by mid November.

We have over 6200 tonnes of salt in stock ready for the gritting season.

We have also negotiated sharing resources with Kier/Highways England; they use our Thorn depot to store some of their gritters, and we use their depot near the M50 for several of ours.

Winter season started on 1st November, and we have already been out gritting several times.

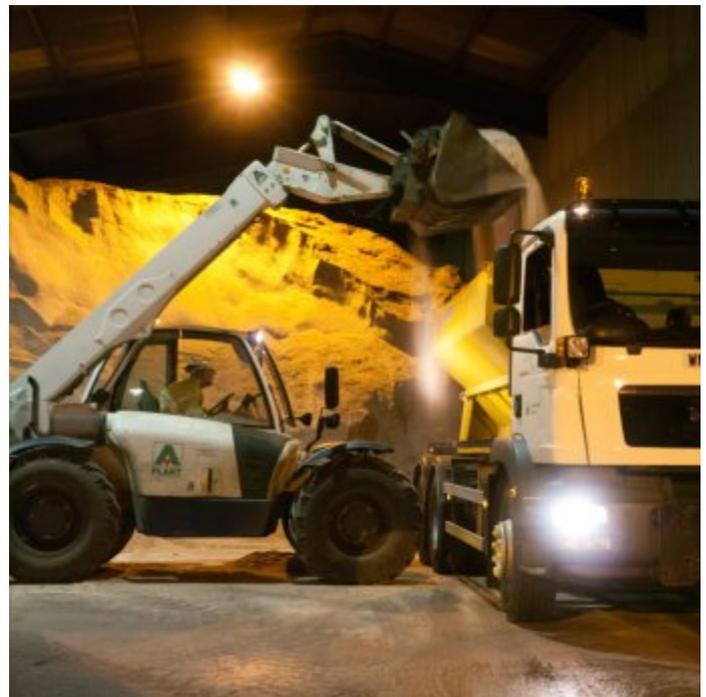


Photo credit: Michael Mable

Investors In People



An engaged, developed and well managed workforce is important for any successful organisation. We are really keen to listen further on how we can improve on our employee engagement and team development, and we do this in several ways.

We already run an annual staff survey where staff can anonymously answer wide ranging questions about management, morale, health and safety, structure and so on. We have staff representatives at every level of the business and they meet regularly to discuss all sorts of issues.

Additionally we are now exploring the potential benefits that Investors in People accreditation may bring us.

Investors in People are an international standard for people management, and we hope that by becoming an Investors in People company we will improve our leadership skills, and support and manage our staff well.

An independent assessor visited BBLP last month to benchmark where we are and what we could do better. We'll keep you posted as to our progress.

High Town update



Work continued apace in High Town. We had been working hard on remedial drainage works, and repaving in Widemarsh Street, and into the High Street. This phase of the work was completed and the compounds removed on 18th November, in time for the switching on of the Christmas lights, which happened on the 20th November at 5pm.



Drop-in Sessions for next years' programme



On 14th December we will be holding drop-in sessions to hear your views on the proposed resurfacing and surface dressing programme.

Budgets



As ever, our budget is under increasing pressure. We are currently considering several options to work out where we might best make the reduction in service delivery that may be necessary to the Public Realm Service given the anticipated budget cuts that HC may make in February for the 2017/18 financial year.

At our Members' and Parish briefings in September and October we discussed several possibilities, including reducing or stopping the amenity grass cuts in our more rural areas, and removing the routine gully cleansing programme. We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

Potential savings options	Public Experience	Risk
Drainage – removal of programmed gully cart	Increased risk of flooding on network leading to disruption on the network for road users. Potential for more road closures and increased pressure on capital budget due to accelerated degradation of the road network.	High
Removal of Amenity grass cutting service to villages	Increased pressure on Parishes to maintain assets. Overgrown grass in villages. Public unable to use green space and potential negative impact on tourism. Stark visual impact.	High
Increased enforcement of landowners responsibilities	Landowners who do not meet their riparian responsibilities will experience enforcement action.	Medium

Speed Indicator Devices



A briefing note has been sent out to inform parishes about the new SID programme. We have purchased 6 new SIDs which are now available for parish use. In the past, HC has subsidised the cost of using the SIDS, and so from April 2017 a new charging structure will be in place. For further information please call the Knowledge Centre.

Contact us

If you need to report an issue to us, please continue to use the report-it link on the Herefordshire Council website which can be found at

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-it>

Alternatively please ring our Knowledge Centre on **01432 261800**.

The HC website is undergoing a facelift and will be re-launched in mid-December.