

**Written Report for North Bromyard Group Parish Council, Bromyard Town Council and Whitbourne Parish Council March 2022**

I write this report with a heavy heart knowing that events in Ukraine put into perspective the hopes and plans for our town and county that we discuss and sometimes even argue about. Having visited Ukraine, and my wife until the invasion still working to train the Ukrainian probation service (remotely), we both feel for the pain and anguish that many are now suffering. My wife remains in daily contact with some of her Ukrainian colleagues.

I welcome Cllr. Clare Davies to her new ward of West Bromyard and will work with her to help her settle in to her role and for the greater good\* of Bromyard

**Bromyard specific.**

The work to realign the end of Rowberry Street by the zebra crossing by the Post Office has raised many questions amongst residents.

BBLP have provided the following which may answer some of the queries: "There has been various inquiries from members of the public regarding the ongoing construction works in Bromyard. The priority objective of the scheme has been to improve the safety at the pedestrian crossing directly outside of the post office. There have been multiple serious incidents over the last few years at this crossing and the works are expected to reduce this. It is important to note that, of the 5 personal injury collisions that occurred at the crossing during the last 5 years, all have involved vehicles turning right out of Rowberry Street colliding with pedestrians negotiating the crossing.

As with any works within a historic market town environment, the scope to physically construct an improvement is particularly challenging due to restricted space and close proximity of existing infrastructure/buildings. Ultimately, during the investigation of options it became clear that the ability to re-position and re-engineer the existing crossing into a position that meets current design standards and existing pedestrian "desire line" needs between the Market Square car park and the Post Office was not possible without extensive changes to the existing infrastructure which were unlikely to be feasible, popular with the community, or affordable within current budgetary constraints.

In light of these issues, it was proposed to increase the segregation between the junction exit from Rowberry Street and the existing crossing location as much as is physically possible. This should remove a potential "in vehicle" blind spot issue with pedestrians using the crossing, and create a slower more acute right turn for vehicles. The alignment change has also presented the opportunity to marginally bring forward the Rowberry Street give-way line which further improves visibility to the right onto Sherford Street, making vehicle exit safer.

During its development, the proposed scheme has been discussed at length with both the Ward Councillor, representatives from the Town Council and Herefordshire Council's Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport, all of whom indicated their support for the proposal.

As mentioned, the kerb and pedestrian area on Rowberry Street is to be extended into the carriageway to narrow the lane and force drivers turning right onto Church Street to take a wider berth giving a more direct line of sight of the pedestrian crossing. The outmost portion of the 20mm low kerb extended into Church Street is to allow large vehicles to mount the overrun area and utilize a wider turning radius. This section will be filled with red imprint surface raise overall driver awareness.

Two traffic islands (20mm high, 610mm wide, and 2000mm long) with red imprint surface are to be installed on either side of the pedestrian crossing in the centre of the carriageway. These islands are designed to be low enough to allow large vehicles to pass over them where required while raising general driver awareness of the upcoming crossing and enhance the restricted feeling of the street. Unfortunately, one of the newly installed kerb pieces on the southern island has broken off when trafficked after being completed. The broken pieces have been removed and temporarily covered with tarmac to make the carriageway safe for operation. Remediation works on the island began on Wednesday 9th March whilst Church Street was closed during the day for surfacing works.

To further utilize the carriageway closures set up for the priority works, the opportunity has been taken to complete resurfacing on Church Street from the Station Road bridge to the High Street junction. This work will include planing the existing surface, placing new tarmac, and then relining the traffic markings on the street. New anti-skid will be applied to the carriageway surface on the approaches to the pedestrian crossing which will also be refreshed with new paint.

Overall, it is intended that the above works will improve the safety of the pedestrian crossing and the quality of the carriageway through the town."

I have since spoken again with the designer and the raised centre road feature may yet be changed. A short time is required for surfaces to harden before the red tarmac surface is laid.

The Hop Pole planning application has not yet been considered by the planning officer.

I attended the Hope centre for lunch with other pensioners and also attended a similar lunch at the Falcon Mews.

I met with planning officers and the cabinet member to discuss the pedestrian access improvements that had been planned for the Porthouse Rise development. This meeting followed my question at full council. Officers admit that because the plans included 3<sup>rd</sup> party land they are not enforceable. I have asked officers to engage with the landowner in question, and also to bring forward proposals to enhance the highways footpath to the best extent possible, in case opportunities for the combined cycle/pedestrian route continue to be thwarted. Officers commented that such pavement improvements might be augmented by an extension of the 30mph limit, which would be in line with residents, town council and my wishes.

Councillors will note with interest the provision of a 20mph zone through Pembridge (on the A44) which is being trialled with the intention of creating more such zones in built up areas in the county.

I attended the BWTC Traffic Management committee meeting and spoke to answer questions. Flexible bollards have been fixed in position opposite the Lloyds cash point in an effort to discourage parking and allow buses greater space to negotiate the corner.

Work on drainage at the bottom of Linton Lane is planned to reduce the flooding issues that have affected properties there in the past.

#### **Elsewhere in the Ward:**

New signage at the Upper Sapey (High Cross) crossroads are in place. A facility for a vehicle activated sign has been created and this should be installed in the next financial year.

A court case has been publicised this week (HT 19/3) in respect of the lady that caused a fatal accident last June. She was given an 8 month sentence for causing death by careless or inconsiderate driving.

Following confirmation from HC that there is no 30mph limit in Upper Sapey village, the parish council has put forward the request for one which I was pleased to support. A reservoir upstream of Upper Sapey has been the focus of attention by the environment agency who have used high capacity pumps to reduce the water level. Letters were delivered to 30 households by ea officials and the police to advise them of the risk, which I am now advised has been mitigated.

At a full council meeting (the budget meeting) on 11<sup>th</sup> February I tabled several amendments on behalf of the conservative group which would have seen council tax frozen for this year, or contained to the 1% social care precept. All were defeated. The coalition voting as a group against the proposal and also getting support from 3 of the liberal group.

At full council on 4<sup>th</sup> March I tabled an Urgent Motion asking the executive to mobilise the council to support Ukrainian refugees that would be arriving in the county. The Motion was carried unanimously. The Council is actively supporting the Ukrainian support effort and I visited the Ukrainian Womens Support depot yesterday on Three Elm estate in Hereford to meet with organisers and Herefordshire Council staff that are now involved full time in supporting the provision of aid being sent to the war zone. The building being utilised is a Council owned facility. Further work is under way whilst we learn of what government support can be utilised.

The recent storms saw significant numbers of felled trees and branches, BBLP attending several incidents in the ward.

I am currently working on a Task and Finish Group looking at the health impacts of intensive poultry farming and will also present a report at full Council this Friday on changes to the Council's governance structure.

Bringsty Common (see below) are planning a beacon for the Queens Jubilee- this will be in the Linton Parish part of the common, on the hill. Prior to the lighting of the beacon at 9:45pm , there will be festivities held in the afternoon, on the football pitch, with games and stalls; tug of war , 3 legged race , etc.

Welcome resurfacing of Tedney road , planned 16/3 – 22/3 . A 7 day closure promises some reasonable scope for the works, but I have not seen any details.

The Live license appeal hearing scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> May in Hereford.

**Nigel**

[Nigel.shaw@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Nigel.shaw@herefordshire.gov.uk)