

Stratford on Avon District Councillor's Monthly Report for September 2024

Mike Rice, Liberal Democrat District Councillor for Henley-in-Arden

Contact: mike.rice@stratford-dc.gov.uk; mike.rice4henley@outlook.com

Replacement UBUS service delayed

UBUS's replacement service has been delayed until 4th November. It was intended to start at the beginning of September, but more time is needed by Warwickshire County Council (WCC) to manage the changes.

Stratford District Council (SDC) and WCC have worked with the existing providers to extend UBUS, allowing residents to continue to access UBUS across the District until the new service is in place.

Four buses instead of five are operating the UBUS service until 1st November, although all other details including booking, operating times and areas covered remain the same.

Currently provided jointly by SDC and WCC, UBUS is the local 'dial-a-ride' community transport for local residents who either cannot access public transport because of mobility issues, or live in an area with limited or no public transport. The new arrangement will be a similar Demand Responsive Transport Service (DRT) operated solely by WCC.

However, SDC has released further funding of £70,000 to the £50,000 already agreed to ensure the DRT service remains accessible to as many residents across the local District as possible.

The extra funding will be sufficient for WCC to provide a late afternoon and evening DRT service between 4.30pm and 7pm across the whole District. This had originally been proposed to be withdrawn. It will also allow WCC to procure an additional vehicle to cover Stratford-upon-Avon town and the Tiddington area.

As part of the new transport arrangements, there has been a significant increase in Stratford-upon-Avon scheduled bus route capacity, including improvements to the existing No.19 route, in place since 20 July, and a new No.6 route between Old Town and Tiddington that started on 1 September.

The number 6 service operates between Old Town and Tiddington via a number of stops in the town including the Maybird Centre, Arden Street and Wood

Street. Details and times of these services are available via [WCC's website - https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/buses](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/buses) or by calling 01926 412929 (option 3).

Enhancements provided by the DRT service will include a new booking centre. This will retain telephone bookings as well as provide a web-booking provision and a new booking app. More modern and environmentally-friendly vehicles will be introduced that will maintain a minimum of one wheelchair user space per vehicle and potentially expand this to two, subject to vehicle configuration.

DRT will be available across the whole District between 10am and 2.30pm and 4.30pm and 7pm, subject to demand. Current charges of £4 per single and £6 per return journey will be kept at least for the first 12 months, but free travel will be still available for those with a concessionary bus pass.

It's not too late to apply for free home energy upgrades

Henley residents should apply for Home Upgrade Grants **before 30 September** for their homes to be made warmer in time for next winter.

To be eligible for an energy-efficiency grant, households must:

- Not use mains gas for heating
- Have a household income of under £36,000 a year, regardless of any savings
- Have a home Energy performance Certificate (EPC) of D, E, F or G (but an EPC can be arranged for free if needed)

Eligible properties will be assessed by a retrofit expert and suitable measures will be installed completely free of charge.

Start the application process at [GOV.UK HUG2 eligibility checker](#).

Alternatively, find out more on the Stratford District Council website or call Act on Energy at 0800 988 2881.

Keep up-to-date with what's going on in the District

Stratford District Council (SDC) has launched a regular digital newsletter for residents. Called The Online View, it contains news about what's going on in the District and is sent directly to residents' email addresses every month.

The latest edition, dated 22 August, contains articles on parks, planning, road closures, UBUS, climate concerns and domestic abuse.

Residents who are interested need only to register their email address on the SDC website. They will then be sent The Online View every month.

Select 'News' on the 'Home' page of the website and go to the 'Subscribe to The Online View' box. Alternatively, scroll down the Home page to the 'News & Press' section for the same box.

Meet your District Councillor

Please come along between 10.00am and 12 noon on Saturday, 14th September 2024, to the Community Library, Methodist Church, 115 High Street, to meet your District Councillor, Mike Rice.

Bring your local or private issues, or simply come along to have a chat about what's going on in Henley.