



Wootton Wawen Ward District & Arden Division

County Cllr. Ian Shenton

Proud to represent Bearley, Claverdon, Earlswood, Henley in Arden, Langley, Mappleborough Green, Preston Bagot, Tanworth in Arden, Ullenhall, Wolverton, Wootton Wawen

Mob: 07971 343074 E Mail: ianshenton@warwickshire.gov.uk



County Councillor's report for Henley in Arden Parish Council Meeting as of 2nd December 2024

- **Committee meetings** are increasing again with me sitting on the Licencing Panel, attending site meetings, training, adult social care committee, Audit & Standards committee, Regulatory committee, Local Pension Board, Full Council, selection panel in the last few weeks alone. Some of the committees I sit on at County, I also sit on at the District Council.
- **At this time of the year, we are looking at budgeting and council tax setting.** Many councils are struggling to balance the books and whilst the government have promised a 3.2% increase in funding overall there is a fear that funding will be targeted towards urban areas (typically where politically the Labour party is stronger and we as a rural area may not benefit as much from the 3.2% increase. Historically, the Local Government Finance Settlement has resulted in funding disparities, with urban councils receiving 36% more per head in Government Funded Spending Power than their rural counterparts. This funding gap has compelled rural councils to increase council tax rates, leading to an average rate in rural areas that is 20% higher per head than in urban areas. These higher costs, combined with lower-than-average rural wages, create financial strains that limit the potential for growth and economic development in rural areas. To me, this is a problem as rural areas tend to have more older and colder houses, poor bus services and suffer from social isolation. According to Age UK, 4.6 million older people (age 65+) in England experience one or more of the following: loneliness, poor health, an unmet need for care, and poverty.
- It is also clear to me that many councils, district and county, will look to increase council tax by 2.99%, the maximum increase that can be put forward without special reasons and/or a referendum. Next year will see a spending review and possibly a change in how local authorities are funded. Thankfully Parish Councils are outside the power of any government as they can set their own level of council tax and as many parish councils are sitting on high levels of reserves, they are therefore able to fund some local initiatives. Next year could be very interesting from a funding point of view. Fifty-six local authorities across England, including Stratford-on-Avon District Council, have united with the Rural Services Network (RSN) to address the unique financial challenges they face and to advocate for equitable funding in the forthcoming Local Government Finance Settlement. In a joint letter to the Rt Hon Jim McMahon MP, rural councils have come together to emphasise the need for fair resource allocation to sustain essential services in sparsely populated regions and unlock growth and prosperity in rural communities.

Keir Starmer has said that he will outline milestones that will also ensure the attention and resources of government are focused relentlessly on delivering real and meaningful change," But by implication, it seems some previous pledges may be destined for the political slow lane so 2025 promises to be as interesting as 2024.

At this point I'd like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and New Year

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you feel I can help with an issue. Due to the volumes of queries, it is always best to contact me via email if possible as I try to respond within 48 hours.

County Council News

Pension Credit help - It is estimated around 5,800 pensioners living in the county may be entitled to Pension Credit but are not currently claiming it. People who claim Pension Credit may also be able to get the Winter Fuel Payment and help with heating costs, as well as access to other financial support. The Council is also asking residents to check in with friends and family who may be entitled to Pension Credit and to support them with checking eligibility and making their application.? [Find out more about Pension Credit eligibility here](#)

Winter's colder temperatures can heighten health risks and place extra strain on household budgets, often leading to anxiety that affects both physical and mental wellbeing. Over the winter months the Council will be signposting to a range of useful advice and information through its social media channels and website. For further information and links to resources, visit <https://www.costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk/>

Cost of Living Help is available- if you are struggling to afford food or pay household bills this winter. Information and support are available through www.costoflivingwarwickshire.gov.uk or call the cost-of-living support line: 0800 408 1449

Budgeting for 2025/26 - It is clear that the County Council will have to raise the council tax by 2.99% plus an additional 2% for Adult Social care and the costs are escalation. Whilst the County Council (CC) will be reimbursed for the NI Employers Increase levied by the Labour Government, no such reimbursement exists for care homes and as the CC buys in these services the costs to the CC will increase. The increase in the National Living wage adds further pain. We now have the Financial Policy statement, which gives an indication of the focus on funding. By Christmas we hope to have the Funding settlement which will only be a one-year settlement. Next year there will be a spending review and from that we are hoping that there will be a five-year settlement going forward so that local authorities have some certainty over funding. There is some talk about a shift on funding from rural areas to urban areas so there may be additional surprises and challenges for us yet.



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Funding available

- **Highways Community Action Fund** - The Highways Community Action Fund is about to be released, or a version of it, allowing each parish up to £25,000 on a match fund basis to put forward their own scheme for consideration. For example, the parish can put in more than £25,000 so with a large scheme costing say £75,000, WCC will put in £25,000 and the parish and its partners would put in £50,000. This fund is due to be launched before the end of the year so my advice would be to consider suitable schemes now so that when the scheme is released you are ready to apply.
- **Kind Communities - Kind Food Grant fund** If you are involved in community food projects in Warwickshire, you still have three weeks to apply to Warwickshire County Council's Kind Communities-Kind Food Grant fund. Discover more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5765/there-s-still-time-for-community-groups-to-apply-to-the-kind-communities-kind-food-grant-fund>
- **Tree planting funding** - The application window for community groups to apply for funding to create new orchards and micro woods has been extended until the end of 2024. Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5509/community-groups-given-longer-to-apply-for-tree-planting-funding-in-warwickshire>
- **New funding opportunities with Innovate UK** - Coventry and Warwickshire is working with Innovate UK to enable further funding to drive innovation and business growth in the local Immersive & Creative technology cluster. Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5710/coventry-and-warwickshire-launch-new-funding-opportunities-with-innovate-uk-to-drive-innovation-in-immersive-and-creative-technologies>
- **Warwickshire Business Energy Advice Service** - WBEAS was launched earlier this year as a part of the £4.6 million Business Growth Warwickshire Programme, developed and commissioned jointly by Warwickshire County Council and the five district and borough councils in the county. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero is also funding an expansion to the service as part of a West Midlands Combined Authority pilot including a grant scheme which is managed by the County Council. To find out more about WBEAS and how to apply, visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/WBEAS.

Views sought from survivors of hate crime in South Warwickshire - Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils are seeking the views of victims and witnesses of hate crime in South Warwickshire. A survey has been launched by both Councils, the information from which will be used to help tackle hate crime in specific locations. **You can complete the survey by visiting <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/hatecrime>**

Flu Vaccinations - Flu vaccinations Protect yourself and others this flu season. From October, get vaccinated and reduce the risk of flu-related complications. Check your eligibility via www.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations
[#FluVaccine](#) [#GetWinterStrong](#) [#FightFlu](#)

People are being encouraged to 'Make a Difference' in their communities by embarking on a rewarding career with their local council. A new campaign, 'Make a Difference, Work for your Local Council', aims to inspire individuals to explore career opportunities that have a direct and lasting impact on the lives of local residents. Local councils provide essential services that residents rely on every day, including social care for adults and children, planning, environmental health and finance. Following a successful pilot in the North East of England, the campaign highlights the wide range of roles available in council services, welcoming people from all backgrounds and skill levels who are looking to begin a new role in local government.?

Speeding- This is a major issue around our villages and parishes but as a community we can make a difference by setting up a Community Speed watch. I set up the Wootton Wawen group a couple of years ago, so I am happy to help residents set up a speed watch team if they are interested.

Our local Police Officer **PC Sean Lovatt says** – "I spoke about the Central Reporting System (CRS). As a direct result of the CRS, our team have been advised about specific roads in our region which cause concern. This week we have been out conducting speed monitoring checks in Wootton Wawen, Studley, Claverdon and Henley. We record how many vehicles pass through during the time frame, how many were recorded driving in excess of the speed limit and pass these details back into the CRS, along with vehicle details. Those drivers will be contacted in the post with advice about their speed. This process is exactly the same process carried out by local Community Speed Watch (CSW) volunteers. If you want to know more about starting or joining a CSW in your neighbourhood, do contact us. As a uniformed police officer, however, I have the extra advantage of being able to report drivers whose speeds are particularly excessive. Due to the consistent concerns of many local parish councils in the area, we will be conducting more of these speed checks, on a more regular basis."

Warwickshire's Family Wraparound Service - Warwickshire County Council is pleased to announce a two-year 'test and learn' service to provide preventative and responsive solutions for families at risk of crisis who have children with social and emotional wellbeing support needs. Following a competitive procurement process, The Children's Society (TCS) has been successful in securing the contract to deliver the Warwickshire Family Wraparound Service. The service will initially be available



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from 1 December 2024 to eligible families who are currently supported by a small number of teams in Warwickshire County Council's Children and Family Services. As the service develops, more families in different circumstances will have the opportunity to receive wraparound support. A spokesperson from The Children's Society added: "We are excited to work with Warwickshire County Council in launching the Family Wraparound Service—a proactive initiative designed to provide tailored support for families facing challenges. Together, we are committed to ensuring every family receives the right help at the right time, supporting them to forge stronger connections and embed lasting well-being for all." Find out more about Warwickshire County Council support for children and families at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies.

Small works - Gully Cleaning and potholes – Potholes should be reported through the directly on the WCC website <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4085/warwickshire-county-council-encourages-residents-to-report-road-issues>. **More help is available using this link** : <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5629/drain-cleaning-and-where-to-report-flooding-in-warwickshire> To report a Highway fault, use this link <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/reportaproblem>.

Report flooding For flood advice or to report a flood, please visit

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/flooding.

Issues in other Parishes

- **20mph Scheme in Ullenhall – I have serious doubts that this project will get finished this year**
- **Wall in Wootton Wawen by the Church on South side of WW, south of the village centre A3400** – Lights have been removed and work is almost complete.
- **Crab Mill (A4189 border of Henley and Wootton Wawen)**– No further news on what is to happen with the land.
- **Mayswood Rod/A4189** – No further update as yet on what is happening on this site.

POLICE REPORT

- PC Sean Lovatt, our local beat manager, has issued the following note_Unfortunately, criminals target and befriend children to carry and deal their drugs, paying them a modest fee for their services. They do this to push the risk of criminal prosecution away from themselves. Over time, the groups lean to threats of violence and intimidation to keep the child working for them. Should a child loose drugs or have them take by police, they will tell the child they now owe the gang a debt, one which grows in interest. Even more concerning, the threat of criminal competition encourages children to carry weapons or knives to defend themselves from other children, in the same position. How confident are you in spotting the signs of exploitation in your own children? I want to bring to the attention of all parents, the opportunity to attend FREE online awareness sessions being conducted by the charity Barnardo's.
- **Police supported the fire brigade at a large fire inside Johnson's coach yard** in Henley in Arden. Early estimates put the damage at around one million pounds. As this was considered to be suspicious, early investigations by police discovered that a male was seen in the area of the fire on CCTV. That male was arrested on suspicion of arson and remains in custody.
- **Although vehicle crime is low in this area**, cars are stolen from driveways every winter because owners leave them unattended, with the keys in the ignition, while they warm up and the windscreens defrost. Some vehicle owners nip inside for just a few seconds to collect a bag or finish the last mouthful of coffee – but that's all the time an opportunist thief need. Insurance companies **may not pay out** for cars stolen in this way – and if your house keys are taken as well, you're making your home vulnerable. Freeze out car thieves on frosty mornings:
 - Clear windscreens with de-icer and a scraper.
 - Sit in your vehicle while the heater de-mists the windscreen.

[For general vehicle crime advice please click here](#)

In an emergency call 999, for non-emergencies call 101

Police antisocial behaviour patrols - Warwickshire Police is conducting targeted patrols in hotspots to tackle antisocial behaviour. The Focusing on those locations aims to prevent crime in the specific areas and reduce overall crime levels in the



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wider area. Discover more about Op Resolve: <https://www.warwickshire.police.uk/police-forces/warwickshire-police/areas/warwickshire-police/campaigns/campaigns/2024/op-resolve/>

Instagram videos you can watch on Op Resolve and antisocial behaviour:

- **Verbal abuse** – <https://youtube.com/shorts/rkKkODSysKQ>
- **Noise** – <https://youtube.com/shorts/vVgK-qPfZcc>
- **Littering** – <https://youtube.com/shorts/Blc75FMDxto>

As always feel free to contact me at any time to discuss any issues that you feel I can help with, and I will do my absolute best to help.

Other news and information



Shop local this festive season

Local independent businesses are encouraged to shout about their events and activities in the lead up to Christmas as part of the #WarwickshireChristmas campaign.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5769/share-the-magic-of-shopping-local-this-festive-season>



Child-friendly festive cheer

Warwickshire residents and businesses who want to help children and young people have a happy Christmas are invited to donate presents via a Warwickshire County Council's gift appeal.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5755/spread-some-child-friendly-christmas-cheer->



Christmassy crafts and winter wanders at country parks

A series of festive events are taking place at Ryton Pools Country Park and Kingsbury Water Park, offering the perfect opportunity to embrace the magic of the season while connecting with nature. Discover more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5754/christmassy-crafts-and-winter-wanders-find-out-what-s-on-at-warwickshire-country-parks>



National Tree Week 2024

This week is National Tree Week, why not make a commitment to a greener Warwickshire by planting a tree this tree planting season?

Discover more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5761/support-national-tree-week-2024-let-s-grow-a-greener-warwickshire->

Fruitful Pursuits Community Orchards

Warwickshire County Council is thrilled to announce the planting of the county's first two community orchards under the Fruitful Pursuits Coronation Living Heritage Fund.

Discover more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5763/fruitful-pursuits-as-warwickshire-county-council-celebrates-its-first-two-community-orchards>



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16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

From Monday 25 November to 10 December 2024, Warwickshire County Council and partners will join together to promote the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5764/warwickshire-partners-come-together-for-international-campaign-16-days-of-activism-against-gender-based-violence>



Eco-friendly traffic lights in Warwick town centre

Warwickshire County Council is celebrating the installation of cutting-edge, environmentally friendly traffic signals at the junction of High Street and Swan Street in Warwick Town Centre.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5759/warwickshire-leads-the-way-with-new-eco-friendly-traffic-lights-in-warwick-town-centre>



Scoot smart this Christmas

Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership (WRSP) is supporting the launch of a new resource, Scoot Smart, which forms part of a wider timely campaign to raise awareness of the law and risks surrounding e-scooters.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5760/scoot-smart-this-christmas-and-don-t-buy-e-scooters-as-presents>

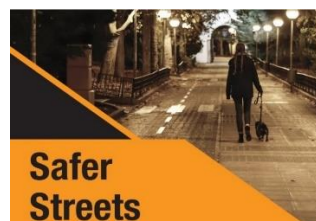


Winter fishing fun at Kingsbury Water Park

At Kingsbury Water Park, there is a rich variety of fish to uncover, with diverse lakes, pools, and a stretch of the River Tame all available to fish.

Start your winter fishing adventure here:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5766/winter-fishing-fun-at-kingsbury-water-park>



New CCTV for North Warwickshire

North Warwickshire's town centre CCTV control room is now able to monitor more of the borough more of the time, thanks to Safer Streets funding.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5770/safer-streets-funding-enables-new-cctv-for-north-warwickshire-and-countywide-community-safety-interventions>



How to prepare for extreme cold weather (X and Facebook)

As we head deeper into winter, take a moment to learn how you can become #BetterPrepared for extreme cold weather, such as making sure your car is winter-ready.

Visit <https://www.warwickshireresilienceforum.org/risks/extreme-cold-weather/> to get going.



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Leamington's free 'Together with Autism' Conference

Find out what's in store and how to register for your free ticket to Leamington's Together with Autism Conference, which takes place on Saturday 7 December at North Leamington School:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5773/book-now-for-leamington-s-free-together-with-autism-conference->



Antimicrobial resistance

Have you ever stopped taking antibiotics before you've finished the course? Or have you shared antibiotics with friends and families without seeing a GP? These can all add to the growing problem of antimicrobial resistance. Discover more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5749/residents-encouraged-to-keep-antibiotics-working-for-antimicrobial-awareness-week-2024>



Apply now for 2025 Reception and Junior School places

Parents and carers with children who are due to start Reception or move to Junior School in September 2025 should apply now for their school place. Read more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5738/warwickshire-parents-and-carers-encouraged-to-apply-now-for-2025-reception-and-junior-school-places>



Care Champions

If you have experience of using Warwickshire County Council's care and support services, or supporting someone who has, you could become a Care Champion.

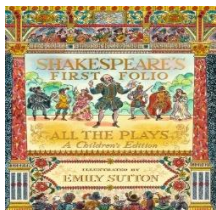
Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5728/council-calling-on-residents-who-have-experience-of-using-adult-social-care-services-to-help-improve-support->



Silver Thrive at Work Award

Warwickshire County Council has achieved the Silver Thrive at Work Award in recognition of its commitment to fostering a healthy and supportive workplace.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5736/warwickshire-county-council-earns-silver-thrive-at-work-award-for-excellence-in-employee-wellbeing>



Children's book - Shakespeare's First Folio: All the plays

Warwickshire County Council is delighted to share that a children's book edited by Dr Anjna Chouhan has achieved national recognition. Discover more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5756/children-s-book-by-warwickshire-libraries-staff-member-achieves-national-recognition>



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Pension Credit -Warwickshire County Council is committed to ensuring the county's eligible residents are supported in claiming their Pension Credit entitlement this winter. Find out more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5658/council-commits-to-raising-awareness-of-pension-credit>



Looking after the vulnerable this winter

Older neighbours, friends and family members, may need some extra help over the winter.

Keeping warm over the winter months can help to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.



Winter wellness: Norovirus

Norovirus is a stomach bug that causes vomiting and diarrhoea.

Washing your hands frequently with soap and water is the best way to stop it spreading. Alcohol hand gels DO NOT kill Norovirus.

It could be Long COVID

If you've had #COVID19 and are suffering with fatigue, breathlessness, or a cough, it could be #LongCOVID19. If you think you may have #LongCOVID19 make an appointment with your GP who can carry out tests and refer you to the #LongCOVID19 clinic.



Helping drivers get winter ready

As winter approaches Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership is reminding drivers that now is a great time to book your vehicle in to a garage for a free winter safety check.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5684/warwickshire-road-safety-partnership-offers-tips-to-help-drivers-get-winter-ready>



Discover Warwickshire's great outdoors

With half term for Warwickshire schools well underway Warwickshire County Council is inviting parents and carers to take advantage of the fantastic outdoor spaces available across the county.

Discover more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5682/discover-warwickshire-s-great-outdoors-this-october-half-term>

Supported internships in Warwickshire - Warwickshire County Council is working to develop pathways to employment for young people with SEND through supported internships.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5681/new-role-to-lead-the-development-of-supported-internships-in-warwickshire>



Mini exhibition series at Warwickshire Libraries

New mini exhibition series: Roman Warwickshire – Making Connections will be hosted by ten different libraries from Autumn 2024 to Spring 2025. Discover more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5686/new-mini-exhibition-series-at-warwickshire-libraries>