**REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR JAMES CROCKER — SEPTEMBER 2025**

As the first report submitted to the Henley JPC, I hope residents find the content useful. Any suggestions are warmly appreciated. The first point is to very warmly thank my predecessor Ian Shenton who has been a first-rate representative over the years - the bar has been set very high. Ian remains a busy district councillor and I am enjoying work closely with him elsewhere across the Arden division.

**Latest on the Unitary Authority Debate**

Following the release of the Government’s White Paper, the county and district councils are developing options that may replace the current two-tier system with either a single county unitary or two smaller unitary councils in the north and south.

My personal opinion is that the case for one large unitary Warwickshire council remains the most compelling. A proposal will be submitted by WCC on or before 28 November 2025. Protecting local services and our unique identity is a key priority throughout this process. There are numerous meetings planned within WCC over the next few weeks; expect this issue to grab much more attention in the local media.

**Flag Policy**

A degree of controversy has recently surrounded the WCC flag policy which has now been clarified, with the independent chair now deciding which flags will be hoisted outside Shire Hall. As a personal observation, this has all been something of a distraction and not an issue high on my agenda.

***In Other News:***

* **Helping Warwickshire residents prepare for the Digital Switchover.** Do you rely on a regular landline? This will be cut off in 2027, requiring a simple change for most households. (Advice available 30 Sept - 10am –2pm, Waterside (opposite Carluccio's), CV37 6BA <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/6996/helping-warwickshire-residents-prepare-for-the-digital-switchover>
* **Help residents quit smoking.** Share your story as part of the Smoke Free Coventry and Warwickshire campaign.<http://www.smokefreecw.co.uk/share-story>
* **Have your say on the budget priorities for WCC.** Online form to provide feedback on where your money is best spent (Closes 12 Oct) <https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/bi/budget-2026-27/>
* **The search is on for the county's eleventh Young Poet Laureate.** (Closes 2nd Oct)<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/youngpoetlaureate>

**Getting in Touch**

For any issues or ideas that would benefit the Henley and Beaudesert JPC area, as your representative, I am always available to listen and support local priorities at Warwickshire County Council.

**James Crocker**

*County Councillor for Arden
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