

Knee-High railings Windermere Way

Local County Cllr Paul Harrison, has arranged with Highways, to install knee-high railings on the grass verge near to the junction with Minster Road. This will hopefully deter people from parking too close to this busy junction and prevent the continued erosion of the verge.



Raven Street Road Closure

Raven Street has been closed for several months following an investigation into a wall that was leaning.

Following inspections with building control the only feasible solution is to demolish both the wall and the building of No. 3 Raven Street. Work will begin as soon as a contractor is appointed. The road will re-open following the demolition.

Elizabeth Mills Centre

On 7th December, Stourport Town Council competed its acquisition of The Elizabeth Mills centre in New Street from Wyre Forest District Council. The centre **will continue to provide the same facilities** as before with the existing trust as leaseholders.

This centre is an important additional asset for Stourport and its community.

Lock Keepers Cottage Planning enforcement

Following residential reports that this site was being developed without planning permission. Your councillors made representations to the Wyre Forest District Council planning enforcement team, who immediately issued a "works stop notice". The notice prevented further works whilst discussions on how to proceed took place.

The external works have been removed and discussions are continuing between the owner and WFDC. A planning application will be needed for any changes to remain.

New Vehicle Speed Activated Sign

In early 2024 the Police and Crime Commissioner, John Campion, invited Councils within West Mercia region to bid for funding to combat speeding in their parishes. Stourport Town Council was successful in securing funds for 2 new vehicle speed activated signs to improve the road safety around our town. **These are currently being installed in areas where speeding is known to be a local concern including Lickhill Road by the War Memorial Park.**



Update from Mark Garnier Member of Parliament for Wyre Forest

Now the new Labour government has settled down, we can see what they are proposing to do and how they will govern. And their first policy proposal? To take away benefits from all but the poorest of pensioners - those in receipt of pension credit.*

Winter fuel allowance has been a lifesaver – literally – to many pensioners. But in an extraordinary move, Labour Chancellor Rachel Reeves has taken this benefit away from hundreds of thousands of financially stretched pensioners. In another move, **the new Labour government is exploring removing the single occupancy discount on council tax.** An 80 year old widow/er will lose not just their £300 winter fuel allowance, but will see their council tax bill increase by 33%.

This is a taste of what is to come. At the end of October, Labour will present their first budget. Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer is warning that it will be tough. Pensioners have been hit; single people already under attack; even many military personnel trying to do the best for their kids will be hit with a 20% hike in the cost of their kid's education. If that is just a sample of what is to come, its going to be a lot grimmer than anyone expected when we all voted just three months ago.

*It is estimated that 1,431 pensioners in Wyre Forest who are eligible are not claiming Pension Credit source: Policy in Practice

If you or a family member needs assistance with a Pension Credit application, assistance is available at Citizens Advice, Age UK or contact my office.

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MATTERS

Update from your local Stourport Areley Kings Division Conservative team



**New pedestrian crossing
see inside for details**

 **Conservatives**

Your local Conservative Team - Working For You All Year Round

Promoted by Caroline Garnier on behalf of WFCA, both at 28 Bewdley Road North, Stourport-on-Severn, DY13 8PS. Printed by Peregion CC, Unit 2B Forward Park, Bagot Street, Birmingham, B4 7BA

New pedestrian crossing for the Kingsway



Your Stourport County Councillors are delighted to confirm that Highways have approved plans for a new pedestrian crossing to be installed on the Kingsway. The new crossing will be situated between Stourport High School and Stourport Sports Club. Cllrs Chris Rogers

and Paul Harrison are delighted to be funding this crossing from their Highways Budget, which will cost £110,000 to install. Works will commence during the Easter holidays 2025 and further details will be shared in our next newsletter.

The new pedestrian crossing funded by your local county cllrs highway budget will be installed over the 2025 Easter holidays

Your Conservative led district council

National Planning Policy Framework

Objections to Labour's proposals

The Conservative led district council have opposed the new proposed standard methodology (the formula) that allocates housing figures to each area.

The Labour Government's proposals would see Wyre Forest's annual dwellings per annum rise from 276 to a staggering 617. Cabinet Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing at WFDC, Cllr Chris Roger, says, "This is

totally unacceptable and would see further green belt land having to be used as there simply will not be enough brownfield land. We totally oppose unnecessary release of further green belt land."

The Cabinet have sent a formal response back to Government and they proposed a notice of motion at full council opposing the proposals in the NPPF.

Plans to regenerate redundant brown field sites



£400,000 from the Brownfield Release Fund for regeneration of this brownfield site.

Stourport received financial support from the previous Government to demolish the disused, derelict county buildings in preparation to sell the site for re-development. The demolition is almost completed and there are a number of potential buyers interested in developing this brown field site.

Additionally, the Conservative led District Council are considering options for the re-development of brown field sites within Kidderminster town centre.

They are currently looking at re-development options for the former Glades leisure centre site and part of the Bromsgrove Street car park.

The emergency housing accommodation, which the previous progressive alliance led council, had proposed for Stourport, is currently being constructed on a former, under utilised, pay and display car park owned by WFDC in Castle Road, Kidderminster.

The launch of "Stourport Future"

To aid applications for future funding opportunities, Stourport first needs a substantive vision to understand what the future really should look like for our residents, businesses and visitors.



Cllr Alan Sutton

Following the elections of 2023 your town, district and county councillors agreed on a new venture for Stourport. In July 2024, following engagement with The High Street Task Force, an alliance of place making experts, "Stourport Future" was created. Over the years we have seen other towns and cities receive funding for special development projects.

The first stage is to create a vision that all future decisions should strive to achieve. To this aim, your Stourport Town Council created the new cross party working party, who initially needed to hear your views on what Stourport should change/improve/ embrace. A survey was created via the Stourport Town Council website, leaflets created and posted in shop windows, some houses and handed out during the carnival. With over 10,000 comments, ideas and suggestions

received from the surveys - a fantastic response, but the work now starts here.

Over the coming weeks and months results will be announced on the headline questions and all responses will be worked through into areas of interest and individual items to work on. Also over the coming months there will be stakeholder and public engagement sessions to discuss the findings and seek other ideas, so if you missed the survey, you will still have a chance to have your say. Please contact your councillors to register an interest.

Separately the Stourport Future working party have held stakeholder sessions with some businesses, civic groups, police, deputy police and crime commissioner, WCC cabinet member for transport and senior WFDC officers. These have been extremely positive and supportive and all have agreed to attend and support future meetings.

Anti-Social Behaviour and crime

The blights of everyone's life, anti-social behaviour and crime, keep raising their ugly heads around the Stourport area.

But you can help! How? By ensuring that what ever the event, however small or large, please report it. Even if you think someone else already

has! Your councillors are often being told by the Police Neighbourhood team and Community Housing that reporting of issues to them is very low. Please encourage everyone to report these directly and not just post them on social media.

Report it to the police on their 111 online system (or 999 if the crime is ongoing or there is an immediate danger to life, yours or someone else's).

Bridge lights replacement

The lights on our historic bridge were replaced for new energy saving LED lights earlier this year. Unfortunately these were replaced with lights not fitting to the design of the bridge. Your district and county councillors worked with Wyre Forest District Council planning enforcement, who have gained agreement from Worcestershire County Council to correct these and replace them with light fittings that are more in keeping with the bridge design.

A new design proposal is being submitted to WFDC for approval ahead of replacing the ones fitted and should be in place in early 2025.

