

Ward Councillor Report: January-March 2023

Master's House and Levelling-Up

The tender enquiry for the Phase 1 of the landscaping works for the Master's House was issued on 15th March and is due to be returned 5th April 23. It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded for a start on site mid-May and the works completed by Mid-July.

In broad terms, the phase 1 works comprises:

- Extension of the existing retaining wall towards St Katherine's Hall.
- Backfilling and paving to create a more level event space.
- Forming a shallow gradient ramp between upper and lower levels
- Balustrading and handrails.
- Installation of power sockets and feature lighting to the rear wall to St Katherine's Hall.
- Refurbishment of the etched map and installation on a new plinth

Viaduct Housing Development

A large number of substantial issues remain outstanding regarding the detailed application for the first phase of the site's development. A consultation on the revised plans submitted by Bloor has recently closed – although I'm sure further comment from the Town Council can be received.

I remain concerned that a layout for the entire scheme is agreed at this stage so that issues such as the protection of a viable second access route, public transport, refuse vehicle access, emergency access, flood risk, viaduct setting, all age play space, foul water treatment, surface water management, safe walking and cycling routes can all be addressed.

BBLP Public Realm

I have reported the blocked large land drain just to the north of the station junction on the Bromyard Road. Once again, Network Rail maintenance schedules do not appear to have sufficient to prevent this drain overflowing and creating not only a walking hazard to those using the PROW at that location, but also to pedestrians, vehicles and businesses using the road. The volume of water carried by this drainage system in heavy rain conditions is startling. We are in the time of April Showers, so I am hopeful that BBLP will be swiftly onto Network Rail's case.

Household Support

Grants, advice and assistance continue to be available for households facing hardship. 100% discount on Council Tax continues for qualifying households and £1.7m has been allocated to continue support in a variety of ways during 2023. The Talk Community website has a range of helpful links as a starting point for reference: <https://www.talkcommunity.org/money-on-your-mind/>

Garden chickens and birds

Avian Flu restrictions on garden birds and poultry continue. More information on the measures to be taken can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/bird-flu-latest-situation-avian-influenza-prevention-zone-declared-across-great-britain#:~:text=If%20you%20suspect%20any%20type,Helpline%20on%2003000%20200%20301>.

Consultations

Proposal to expand places in autism bases in mainstream schools: Views are sought on proposals to expand the number of places in autism bases in mainstream schools in Herefordshire for September 2023.

Consultation closes: Wednesday 22 March to Friday 21 April 2023:

<https://consultations.herefordshire.gov.uk/consultations/article/94/proposal-to-expand-places-in-autism-bases-in-mainstream-schools>

All-Age Autism Strategy consultation: Give your views on Herefordshire and Worcestershire's new Autism Strategy. Consultation closes: Monday 27 March to Sunday 14 May 2023.

<https://consultations.herefordshire.gov.uk/consultations/article/95/all-age-autism-strategy-consultation>

County Council initiatives

I refer councillors to the Herefordshire Council Leader's monthly newsletter for July and August, and to the Talk Community newsletters which are also circulated monthly. These provide more information on developments and initiatives many of which are relevant to Ledbury and its residents. If councillors would like further information on any of the above initiatives, please contact me.

Councillor Liz Harvey

Independents for Herefordshire – Ledbury North Ward Member – 29 March 2023