

CLERK'S INFORMATION SHEET FOR
THE MEETING OF MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL ON 15 JUNE 2021

- 3.1 West Mercia Police Safer Neighbourhood Team – PS Darren Ball; PC Josh Kitchen, 07773 053436, PCSO Adam Westlake, 07773 052580

Get in touch

 **101** to talk to your local SNT/report a crime

 herefordrn.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

 www.westmercia.police.uk



@HerefordCops

Only call 999 in an emergency, when a crime is in progress or life is in danger. If you would prefer to report a crime anonymously please contact West Mercia CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111. For all non emergency reports please call 101. For all other enquiries please email herefordrn.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Crimes reported in April within parish – from West Mercia website

Public order x1, Violent and sexual offences x1.

Reporting an incident of bad/dangerous driving, you can report it online **at the time or soon after** and upload a photo or video that includes the number plate details to <https://www.westmercia.police.uk/police-forces/west-mercia-police/areas/west-mercia/campaigns/campaigns/2019/operation-snap/>

If a road is blocked by such an incident, **you need to report it at the time to 101.**

Crime Prevention Newsletter on parish website (updated as new edition received), copy link to access the news post <https://www.mardenherefordshire-pc.gov.uk/crime-prevention-newsletter/>

- 9.1 Work undertaken May: Mow x1; P3 strim/cut – MR24, gates on MR21, MR45 to church; Strim/cut either side Laystone Bridge; Splays and Signs – safety cuts & clean up (Check for Nesting Birds). Paid for kissing gates – awaiting delivery, work should be done within 6 weeks or so.
Work due in June: Mow x1; P3 strim/cut – MR24, gates on MR21, MR45 to church; Strim/cut either side Laystone Bridge; Drain tops.

Cost of kerb clearing including skip hire would be £905 +VAT each time.

- 9.2 Signs put up on enclosed section of MR24 reminding dog owners to take dog poo bags to home/rubbish bin but not leave on the PROW and clear to up after their dogs – **the signs have now been removed, as has a waymarker!!** MR45 from Laystone Bridge to Church – complaints about cattle, spoke to Farm Manager and advised young animals getting used to their environment, no complaints recently. MR17A – various complaints, Locality Steward and BB contacting landowners. MR26 no obvious path, now addressed by landowner. MR16 no obvious path addressed by spraying a path – however complaint that hen in neighbouring property died. MR21 on obvious path addressed by spraying path. MR38 – complaint about PROW and complaint from landowner about lack of privacy, Locality Steward contacting landowner. Various others PROW issues in process of being addressed or reported online for new stile items. Landowners are clearing paths when requested, however it is taking time to track down every landowner involved. Spraying paths to identify the rout of the PROW is completely legal.

Next batch of kissing gates to replace damaged stiles – MR8, MR39, MR7A. Budget for gates is £2,160, current committed work for 3 gates is £1,663. Balance for more gates £497 – should be able to install one more gate if little more funding available (approx £60).

Following requests from parishioners for accompanied walks, PFO willing to lead informal 'Walk and Talk' group within social distancing rules. She will be available at specific places on Wednesdays if anyone wants to join her.

- 9.3 Draft red lines for redesign from CFG meeting on 20.5.21:
- Felt that 2011 study superseded and should now be forgotten
 - CBW noted that first look shows that if put building on 2 floors, leads to increase in floor area as more circulation space needed – but has asked QS to check figures again
 - Noted old school clock could be displayed in case about size of filing cabinet if wished
 - Red Lines
 - Main meeting room opening onto village green and if possible smaller meeting room and kitchen as well
 - Parish hall not village hall
 - Need daytime meeting facilities and meeting room – for older parishioners, mums & toddlers etc
 - Industrial grade kitchen – maybe come through grant to MVT/CIO – good reheating, chilling facilities, good dishwashing and lots of work surfaces for serving vital as well as cooker – to make money for MVT must have a good kitchen
 - Hearing loop

- Heating system that works and is easy to use for parishioners while taking account of climate change – **CBW** will produce zero carbon report and consider air or ground source heat pump, photovoltaic panels, underfloor heating etc – also consider rainwater recovery for toilets
- Storage – current areas identified for furniture etc, little storage for groups at present – contentious issue but need to concentrate on storage for furniture and essential large items such as mats for indoor bowls, youth club table tennis table etc – up to MVT what do about storage for groups
- Toilets – currently individual cubicles including basin for use by either sex – **CBW** will look at separate facilities but need lot of space
- Parking – conflicting views, need to reduce journeys because of climate change but bring people in from outskirts of parish and outside parish – need to consider how can monitor area with people using carpark for school drop-off and pick-up – current nos. of spaces, disabled/electric charging negotiated with planners, **CBW** will follow up on this – charging for use of electric charge point, can set cost slightly higher that have to pay for electricity so maintenance cost covered – PC could choose to subsidise with grant to MVT for parishioners to use for free
- Ecological features agreed with planners – swales, trees, hedges
- Partition – needs to be high quality acoustic control but easy to use – openings from kitchen also need to be well soundproofed and easy to use
- Cleaner/janitor storeroom needed for equipment
- Overhang roof to provide outdoor but undercover space but currently leads to higher roof space – **CBW** consider if can lower roof but keep overhang
- Most important red line – within budget of £630k for all costs (build, landscaping, all fees, surveys etc)

9.4 **Current Status**

We have formed a small group of people who have met regularly over the last 12 months. The reason for setting up the group was to support the achievement of Herefordshire Councils call of a climate and ecological emergency with a target to become carbon neutral and set aside 30% of land for nature by 2030. Over the months it has become clear that whilst all of us are passionate about the environment, what is important to us individually is quite different. It has also become clear that operating under the umbrella of the Parish Council that what we can and cannot do is probably not what most of us had in mind when we set up. The result of this is we have a group who are becoming frustrated and disengaged.

What do we need?

We have now reached a position where I believe we as a group we need clear guidance on our overall objectives and direction from both the Parish Council and from Parishioners.

As an overall plan this would involve undertaking a survey of Parish Councillors to get clarity on their understanding of the climate and biodiversity emergency and to understand how far we are prepared to push things and what is realistically possible to achieve. From this I can pull together the overall aim and objectives of the group.

As a timeline I would like to get sign off for this at the meeting on 15th June, send out the survey soon after this with responses back in time for me to pull together our overall aims and objectives for discussion at the July meeting.

The next phase would then be to go back to the Parishioners in the autumn with a similar questionnaire and have a coffee morning with information about what we would like to do to try and stimulate interest and thought. My request to you all is to come to the meeting with your views and thoughts on what you want out of the sub group and where you really stand on things like mowing the areas we are responsible for, the verges, car sharing / clubs, how much we should spend on the new village hall and green for environmental reasons, I could go on.

Conclusions

From my point of view, I am passionate about the environment. There are several ways that this can be achieved. My preferred option is to do it through the parish council but if there is not the desire from the councillors and the parishioners to do this then I am far better putting my energies into doing things in a different way.

- 9.5 The Clerk and 2 members of the Gardeners' Association met with an engineer from Cadent Gas and looked at the Rudge Grove and The Volunteer sites. The following was agreed as acceptable by Cadent:
- Rudge Grove – The bench must not be moved though either gravel or paving can be laid under the bench to give a footing for people sitting there, provided great care is taken with no digging out of the current surface and no banging down of paving slabs – there is a very sensitive shut-off valve in the hut which can be affected by vibration and if triggered would cut the supply off; No digging down for a bed is allowed, though the current planter can be moved and a larger herb planter can be installed, away from the current path; No more paving can be placed alongside the current paving due to the gas pipe running underneath.
- The Volunteer – Backless benches can be placed but only on the section to the east of the telegraph pole and from opposite the inn sign; Very shallow planting can be laid along the pavement edge as planned but only with minimal digging, no-dig planting was discussed and agreed as best.

Still waiting for a site visit from Gigaclear to The Volunteer site.

- 9.6 The Local Policing Charter has been introduced to outline the ongoing commitment to local policing delivery and providing a service communities both expect and deserve. Ensuring each of the Parish councils our Policing area covers are aware of what they can expect from us is essential. We will continue to focus on our three key priorities of Safer Homes, Safer Roads and Safer People. These priorities are driven by six key themes:

Visibility & accessibility: As a team we are keen to be seen and engage with the community. We have previously shared our contact details and have done again at the bottom of this email. Being able to listen to your concerns is important to us and we will again reiterate our commitment to attend Parish meetings (either virtually or in person when restrictions allow). Plans are also being made for the re-introduction of pop up beat surgeries so communities can come and speak with us, get to know the team and discuss any concerns they might have.

Responding to communities: We are aiming to utilise all available forms of communication to ensure that we fully understand your community issues. We will respond to concerns raised by Parish councils as well as those raised by individuals. With the relaxation of Coronavirus restrictions we are looking at utilising our Engagement van and publishing a timetable of visits to areas so residents are aware of when we will be in their local area and available to listen to specific concerns. As part of this we are asking parish councils to tell us what the top three concerns they have for their area. We will then discuss these concerns and come up with a plan of how to tackle these plans with an agreed timeframe. Social media will be used to spread word of witness appeals, promote safety messages and share the work we are doing in your community.

Prevention: We are committed to tackling recurrent and connected problems in communities and will work proactively with communities and partner agencies to prevent issues taking hold. Communities can be assured that we look at every incident that occurs within our Policing area with a view of identifying crime trends and tailor our time to tackling these issues.

Vulnerability: We are trained to identify vulnerable individuals and where it is identified ensure that we offer the correct support and signposting to support agencies. Victims of crime will receive reassurance visits and be offered further support from the Victim Advice Line. Locations where vulnerability is identified such as residential care homes and schools will receive dedicated visits ensuring we are approachable and open to them.

Relationships: Being connected to our communities is the key to us being successful. We want the community to know who we are. We want the community to recognise us and be able to approach us. Tell us about community groups and events so we can come along, show our support and build relationships with the community. We will be open and honest with the community about what can be expected of us and we want the community to be honest with us and tell us about the issues that affect them.

Partnerships: We want to work closely with you and our partner agencies to provide the most cohesive and effective response to issues whenever and wherever the opportunities arise. Community schemes such as Community Speedwatch and Neighbourhood Watch have our full support and we will link in and take part where possible.

News:

Starting in June 2021 we will be rolling out community newsletters with details of community concerns and what we are doing to combat issues that are affecting you. The exact details of the frequency of publication and how they will be distributed are still under consideration. If you have notice boards and wish to display a copy then send us details of locations and a point of contact.

The team currently consists of one PC and one PCSO with a vacancy for a second PCSO (hopefully this should be filled later this year as interviews are due to take place imminently). Josh recently joined the team after 5 years on the response teams in Hereford and has an additional role of being one of the county's Wildlife Crime Officers. Adam has been on the team for 18 months after joining West Mercia as a PCSO in 2007 and together cover 80 square miles of villages and countryside.

Each Parish is different and will want different levels of updates and engagement with us. We are here to make your community safer so tell us what you want from us and we'll work in together for a safer Herefordshire.

How you can help us:

Each Parish Council is being asked to provide their **three main local concerns** (Policing related) so we can come up with a plan on how to tackle these issues. We would also like to ensure we have up to date contact details for each Parish Council with a named point of contact. In order for us to restart our community beat surgeries we could utilise Community facilities such as village halls etc (Covid regulations depending) so details on what facilities are available for us to consider.

Could each council reply to us with these details as soon as possible so we can progress these plans.

- 9.7 11 sessions carried out in May. 1,368 vehicles monitored with 150 speeders recorded.

- 9.8 In 2018 NALC gave a legal opinion to all councils that considered the conflicting legal position in the Local Government Act 1894 and the Local Government Act 1972. The conflicting positions are whether councils are prohibited from being involved in the property relating to the affairs of the church eg. maintenance or improvement of building or land or contributing to the costs (as set out in the 1894 Act) or whether a council is permitted to maintain a closed churchyard (as in the 1972 Act). NALC considered that grants to maintain church property are prohibited under the 1894 Act.

NALC summarised as follows: There is no case law to resolve the question of whether or not the 1894 Act restrictions override the provisions of later Acts of Parliament and that ultimately the courts will have to decide. This would be expensive and time-consuming. Parliament could clarify in new legislation but does not consider it is required as it's view is that the 1894 Act provisions do not override the provisions of later Acts. **Whilst there is no consensus on this issue, a council that considers making a payment in these circumstances needs to consider whether it is prudent to take a course of action that it cannot be certain is legally valid.** This opinion was confirmed in a further document from NALC in December 2019, following a document from ChurchCare which stated that councils are not prohibited from awarding funding to churches.

Marden Parish Council has previously given £1,150 to Marden PCC annually towards the maintenance of the closed churchyard but ceased doing so following the NALC legal advice. Following representations from Marden PCC, in March 2020, the parish council agreed in principle to give the PCC a grant for the maintenance of the closed churchyard as previously and requested details on the annual cost of maintenance for this area and the breakdown of costs involved. Latest figure provided is average annual costs over the past 5 years = £1,735.70.

- 9.9 On the website associated with Marden is for application 163158, an S&A application for £15k towards developing (and possibly implementing) a TRO. There is a balance of £10,155.65. Has the TRO been submitted and approved or rejected. if rejected could we use the £10k balance on other road measures in Marden? Also, presumably the S106 for NHF will be added in the near future following planning approval or as part of it. When that appears the PC needs to make sure it is accurate and reflects the current thinking.
10. Email from Paul Walker, new Herefordshire Council Chief Executive:
Now that I am officially in post as Chief Executive, I just wanted to get in touch to say how much I look forward to working with you and also thank for supporting our elections and helping to ensure Herefordshire can vote safely. I met with council staff virtually on Tuesday to share my plans for the coming months and I posed them a question- a similar one I would now like to ask you: As Chief Executive, **what is the one thing I can do to make your role as parish councillor better?**
11. **Correspondence – significant items received as follows:**
From parishioners –
- Email to Chair re recent spike in Covid cases and concerns about monitoring in local firms
 - Email re cattle in field on MR45
 - Email via website re holiday club at school
 - Email to PFO re MR30, MR16 and MR34
 - Phonecall query about drones flying from carpark
 - Email to Chair request to use gazebos for church event in September
 - Emails re notices about PROW closures on MR37 and MR33 (passed to Locality Steward) and issues with MR18A and MR18B (passed to PFO)
 - Email re query about use of Urgent Planning Matters policy in minutes from May
 - Email to PFO – query over legality of using weed killer to clear path of PROW through crop to allow use of path – checked with BB and perfectly legal
 - Emails requesting personal attack alarms
- From other sources –
- From Herefordshire Council (HC) – Result of court case on virtual meeting
 - From HALC – Result of court case on virtual meeting
 - HALC – Information Corner and attachments
 - From HC – Thank you from Census Engagement Manager
 - From HC – Police and Crime Commissioner election results
 - From HC – message from new Chief Executive
 - Hereford Civic Society – Zoom seminar on Driving up standards of design and energy efficiency
 - From HC – Draft Local Housing Strategy Consultation
 - From HC – The Queen's Green Canopy campaign
 - From HC – new Talk Community areas and support officers
 - From S&A – emails re recent Covid outbreak in packhouse staff and confirmation that Indian variant not found in these workers though has been found in Herefordshire
 - From S&A – Notes of Liaison Meeting in April
 - From HC – S106 Wish List – what funds can be spent on
 - From Police and Crime Commissioner – annual survey
 - From HC – Boundary Commission review