County Councillor's update: Warndon Villages Parish Council meeting on 5th Jan 2026

County Council meetings of note:

Next Full Council meeting Thurs 15th Jan, 10am at Wychavon District Council offices in Pershore. Agenda, papers and video record of the meeting are available at Agenda for Council on Thursday, 15th January, 2026, 10.00 am - Modern Council

All County Council meeting dates and papers are available via:
https://worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1

Budget: follow forthcoming meetings: OSPB 6th Jan and Cabinet 13th Jan

In last month's WVPC meeting, I was asked what reserve balance Worcestershire County Council has. As you can imagine, there have been several recent meetings about next year's budget, with 6th Jan OSPB scrutiny meeting focussing on this precise topic. The recent figures I have seen are currently confidential, but an updated overall draft budget report will be published Mon 5th Jan within the agenda pack of Cabinet meeting on 13th Jan: Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 13th January, 2026, 2.00 pm - Modern Council and this should help give an open and unrestricted financial picture.

SEND Update:

No December SEND update – the last update was the November SEND update

You can read the full November update on the SEND Local Offer website.

https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/news/november-send-update

Local Issues

Hindlip Anaerobic Digester: New docs added 5th Dec 2025 onwards

Several new Consultee Comments added: 414 to 423 inclusive. Worth reading in detail. Especially:

 # 417 WRS: *"WRS have reviewed the amended documents and have no updated comments in regard to Air Quality. Previous comments in this respect still apply"* [AC note: see # 298]

 # 418 Local Lead Flood Authority:
"*The LLFA still seeks resolution of the following matters ahead of determination of this application:*

- *on-site infiltration testing;*
- *third party landowner approval, and;*
- *ditch survey.*

If the above matters can be addressed, then the following matters can be covered by the addition of Conditions to any approval that might subsequently be granted…"

 # 419 Environment Agency raises several points and merits a thorough read. I have highlighted key parts in red font:

*"**Environmental Permit**: We have checked our records and can confirm that we have not received a permit application relating to this site since June 2025, when the last permit application was returned to the operator."*

***"Response to Complaint History:** We note the complaints history document, which details indicative problems experienced on sites of a similar nature. We would reiterate that the relevant sector guidance provides the expected standards; Biological waste treatment: appropriate measures for permitted facilities - Guidance - GOV.UK. A permit application would review the efficacy of these proposals, and the planning application will determine if this is a suitable location for this facility to be developed. If the permit application demonstrates that the applicant cannot meet the standards that we expect, then the permit would not be granted even if the planning permission is granted. We cannot make the assessment ahead of the permitting team's work to form any opinion on the likelihood of granting a permit at this stage. "*

*"**Digestate spreading and storing during winter months**: In our previous letter dated 3 July 2025, we questioned what the arrangements were when the digestate cannot be spread in winter months. We note that there does not appear to be evidence of contracts, including how off-spec material would be dealt with.*

The operator states "Winter digestate storage will be off site at strategic locations and on farm that require the final product. All digestate will be compliant and certified to PAS 110 as a product and controlled by APHA."

This does not adequately address the query, especially for off spec material. During the permitting process we would expect to see a detailed contingency plan for storage when digestate cannot be spread. Our comments from the above referenced previous letter still apply and the digester tanks at the site only provide less than a month's storage."

*"**Feedstock**: It remains unclear how much of this will be directed to this plant for example, this may just be a standard waste code suite rather than their intention to import significant quantities of this waste. As previously discussed, if this is a significant singular input, it is worth bearing in mind that the vehicles that would import this are not required by law to be refrigerated, and that this can create significant odour which we are unable to regulate."*

***"Twin Tracking**: We previously recommended the twin tracking of the permit and planning applications and explained the benefit that this would help to give greater certainty to the planning application and assist in your decision making. The council may wish to wait for the outcome of the EP to give certainty to their planning decision, in consideration of the appropriateness of the land use; and ensure that the relevant avoidance and mitigation controls are in place. However, we recognise that we cannot give certainty as to when a permit may be determined at this stage."*

No further comment yet from Lichfields or W Mercial Police / H&W FRS since doc # 328 uploaded 28/07/2025

Consultation deadline is 5th Jan 2026. The County's planning and regulatory committee next meets on 3rd Feb 2026 Agenda for Planning and Regulatory Committee on Tuesday, 3rd February, 2026, 10.00 am - Modern Council

All documents and details visible on the planning website:

https://worcestershire.planning-register.co.uk/Planning/Display/23/000007/CM

Trotshill Lane East 'kissing gate' by A4440 toucan crossing

Bollards will be installed on both kissing gates to replace the wooden sleepers on the East side one and the metal barrier on the western one; **this work is scheduled for Feb 2026.**

Accessibility improvements: replacement of metal barriers with bollards.

Bollards will be installed to replace metal barriers at key locations. Proposed sites, in priority order, are:

Location 1 - Dugdale Drive (both sides)
https://w3w.co/small.hugs.clay and https://w3w.co/edit.term.asleep

Location 2 - Plantation Drive, (both sides)
https://w3w.co/claim.solve.sorry and https://w3w.co/jaws.shave.double

Location 3 - Hastings Drive (both sides)
https://w3w.co/clean.limes.slate and https://w3w.co/added.task.maker

Location 4: Ankerage Green (3 sets)
https://w3w.co/admits.quest.green and https://w3w.co/select.stiff.grape at entrance off Mill Wood Dr and https://w3w.co/orange.claps.heads by Lyppard Grange primary school

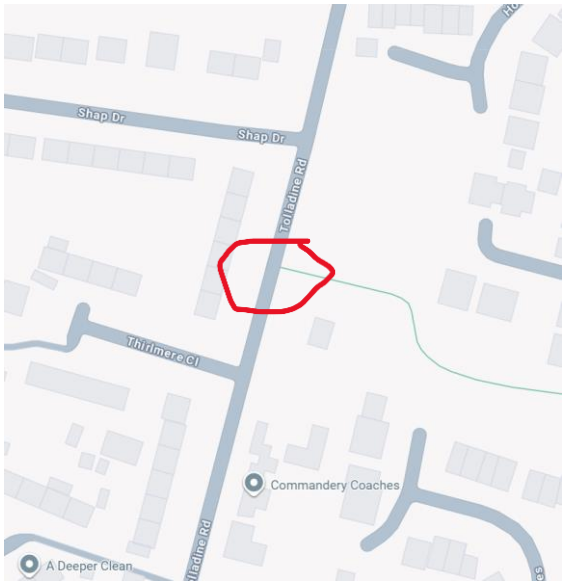
Other locations – if funds permit – on Hastings Drive (4 locations):

1. https://w3w.co/keys.such.senses (hopefully can include with barriers of Location 3 above?)
2. https://w3w.co/onions.garage.fund & https://w3w.co/itself.themes.meal (entrance Tamworth Ave)
3. https://w3w.co/tidy.acid.safe & https://w3w.co/report.chip.race (entrance Goodrich Ave)
4. https://w3w.co/begin.slides.curvy & https://w3w.co/pints.tones.circle (entrance Dover Ave)

Notable road / path works in/near Warndon Villages - see *https://one.network/ for full details*

Dropped kerbs installed successfully on the shared-use path between Woodgreen Drive (new toucan crossing site) and Tolladine Road (near Commandery Coaches depot) by the postbox where it meets old Tolladine Road. Initial feedback has been positive.





I am keen to progress improvements to local roads and paths while the opportunity remains to do so.

Please report online any roadway flooding issues or roads / tarmacked paths that you see which are in need of priority repair, then email me the details and report reference number:
https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/travel-and-highways/report-road-or-path-issue

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Other County News:

see https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/news

Pop-up vaccination clinics for MMR or HPV catch-up jabs.

If you missed out on the MMR or HPV jab, there is another chance this January or February.

Pop-up clinics will be running across Worcestershire to offer free catch-up MMR and HPV vaccinations for anyone who did not receive them as part of the routine childhood immunisation programme.

Measles is highly contagious and can be serious at any age. It spreads easily through coughing and sneezing, and anyone who isn't vaccinated or who hasn't previously had the illness is at risk.

The MMR vaccine is a safe and effective combined vaccine that protects against measles. Mumps and rubella are available to anyone over 5 years who has not yet been fully vaccinated. Two doses of MMR vaccination are needed to be fully vaccinated.

Measles is highly contagious and can be serious at any age. It spreads easily through coughing and sneezing, and vaccination is the best form of protection.

Worcestershire ranks among the top areas in the West Midlands for MMR vaccination, with over 90 per cent of children receiving both doses by the age of five. However, increasing the vaccination rate even further will help prevent the spread of measles in the community.

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the name of a very common group of viruses that spreads through skin contact. Certain types cause several cancers, including cervical, throat, anal, and genital cancers, as well as genital warts. The HPV vaccine protects against the most harmful, cancer-causing type of HPV and provides long-lasting immunity when given at a young age.

More than 73 per cent of eligible young people in Worcestershire have received their HPV vaccine, but some may have missed out due to illness, being home educated, or other reasons. The catch-up HPV vaccine is available for free on the NHS for:

- all girls aged 24 and under up until their 25th birthday
- boys born after 1 September 2006 up until their 25th birthday

The pop-up clinics will be held at community venues across Worcestershire throughout January and February. A full list of dates and locations is available online www.schoolvaccination.uk/catch-up-clinics/catch-up-worcestershire

Lisa McNally, Director of Public Health, said: "Vaccinations are one of the most effective ways to protect teenagers and young adults as they take their first big steps into adult life and begin spending more time in wider social settings, whether that's starting college, beginning a new job, travelling, or enjoying festivals.

"If you or your child missed the routine vaccinations, perhaps due to illness or because of being home educated, please make the most of the upcoming catch-up clinics over the next couple of weeks."

Dr George Henry, GP and Clinical Lead for NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire, added: "Prevention through vaccination is the only way to reduce the risk of harm to you or your family. If you are a young person or a parent and your child has missed out on getting these important immunisations, it's easy to book into a catch-up clinic and get vaccinated."

If anyone has symptoms of measles, please stay at home and phone your GP or NHS 111 for advice. Do not go to GP surgeries or A & E departments, so the illness doesn't spread to others.

For more information on measles and the MMR vaccine, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/measles and for HPV, visit https://www.nhs.uk/HPV

https://www.worcesternews.co.uk/news/25730512.measles-hpv-catch-up-clinics-worcestershire/

Free online parenting support available to Worcestershire families

Worcestershire families can now access free online support to help with parenting and family wellbeing.

Parents, carers, grandparents and teenagers across the county are being encouraged to take advantage of a free online learning offer designed to support family life and emotional wellbeing.

Togetherness supports healthier relationships and happier lives by offering parenting ideas you can trust, helping families move from understanding to thriving.

The service offers Worcestershire residents free access to self-guided online courses, available day or night, so families can log on whenever it suits them.

Designed by experts, the online resources help families better understand emotions, behaviour and relationships at every stage of life. From pregnancy and the early years through to the teenage years and adulthood, Togetherness provides trusted guidance to help families feel more confident and supported.

Parents and carers can learn more about their child's feelings as well as their own. There's also lots of practical ideas for strengthening relationships and supporting healthy emotional development.

Topics covered include:

- understanding pregnancy, labour, birth and your baby
- your baby's development
- child behaviour and emotional development
- neurodivergence and additional needs
- adolescence for both teens and parents
- adult emotional health, including trauma

Councillor Satinder Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing at Worcestershire County Council, said: "Parenting doesn't come with a handbook, and every family faces challenges at different times. Togetherness offers practical, trustworthy support for families. I would strongly encourage parents and carers across Worcestershire to make use of this free resource, which can help build healthier relationships and support emotional wellbeing for the whole family."

The Togetherness online learning is free for Worcestershire residents and can be accessed by visiting togetherness.co.uk/learn and using the code PARENTSROCK.

If you would like face-to-face support, contact your local Family Hub to find out more about their full range of parenting courses and services. Visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/familyhubs for more information.

Free online parenting support available to Worcestershire families | Worcestershire County Council

Deadline approaching for Primary, First, Infant, Junior and Middle School applications

Parents and carers across Worcestershire are reminded that the deadline to apply for a Primary, First, Infant, Junior and Middle School place for September 2026 is fast approaching.

The deadline is Thursday 15 January 2026.

Parents and carers can apply for their child's school place via the secure online portal, available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions.

For families without internet access, Worcestershire Libraries offer free computer use and Wi-Fi at all library sites. Additional support is also available from schools or by contacting the School Admissions Team on 01905 822700.

Families are encouraged to include their catchment school as one of their three preferences. If an application for the catchment school is not submitted on time, the child may not be eligible for school transport. However, a place at the catchment school cannot be guaranteed. Parents can check which school serves their area using the Worcestershire County Council School Catchment search available online.

Before applying, parents are also encouraged to consider how their child will travel to school.

Walking, cycling or using public transport can be practical and sustainable options, whereas choosing a school that is difficult to reach or involves significant transport costs may not be ideal. Information about home to school transport assistance for Worcestershire residents is available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooltransport or by calling 01905 765765.

Full details about the application process, catchment areas, and key dates can be found on the Worcestershire County Council website at apply for a school place.

Families are encouraged to submit their applications before the closing date, to ensure their preferences are considered as on time.

Deadline approaching for Primary, First, Infant, Junior and Middle School applications | Worcestershire County Council

Recycle your Christmas tree this New Year

If you're one of the six million households in the UK that brought a real Christmas tree into your home, don't let it go to waste – recycle it instead!

Worcestershire County Council is encouraging residents to recycle their Christmas trees to help protect the environment and give back to the community. Recycling your tree is easy and convenient, with several options available.

You can take your tree to any of the 11 Household Recycling Centres across Worcestershire. These centres accept green waste, including old Christmas trees, and are **free for Worcestershire residents to use.** While centres are closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day, they're open every other day to make your post-holiday clean-up simple.

If you have a garden waste collection service, you can chop up your tree and place it in your garden waste bin. Please check your garden waste collection service as not all District Councils collect brown bins all year.

In addition to recycling centres**, several local charities offer tree collection services in exchange for donations**, combining environmental responsibility with support for meaningful causes:

- St Richard's Hospice: Collecting trees in WR postcodes - Christmas Tree Collection - St Richard's Hospice
- Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust
- Kemp Hospice: Sign up for their Christmas tree collection service
- Primrose Hospice: Participate in their "Treecycle" program
- Budget Waste Management

For more information on recycling and suability initiatives, visit www.letswasteless.com

https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/news/recycle-your-christmas-tree-new-year

Worcestershire welcomes multi-year government funding for highways, active travel and bus service improvements

Worcestershire County Council has welcomed recent announcements from the Department for Transport (DfT), confirming funding for highways maintenance and bus service improvements in the county.

The government has set out Worcestershire's highways maintenance capital allocation for the next four years, providing improved financial certainty compared with the previous one-year settlement for 2025/26.

The funding covers all aspects of the county's highway network, including carriageways, footways, cycleways, bridges and street lighting.

Under the latest DfT announcement, Worcestershire's highways funding is expected to increase from £29.57m in 2025/26 to £44.02m by 2029/30, subject to the authority meeting national Incentive Fund conditions.

The Incentive Fund requires councils to publish annual transparency reports, with 50% of the funding next year dependent on meeting those requirements.

Confirmation has been received of a further funding over the next 3 years under the Local Authority Bus Grant to improve bus services.

The funding will be used to deliver the priorities set out in the Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan to make buses more frequent, reliable and better integrated, expand coverage (including rural and on demand services), improve bus stops, information and ticketing across the county.

Active Travel England has also confirmed the county will receive further funding to enhance local walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure.

Councillor Karl Perks, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport at Worcestershire County Council, said: "I welcome the government's announcements, which gives Worcestershire a clearer long-term view of highways funding and recognises the importance of maintaining and improving our transport network. These allocations will help us plan more effectively and continue to invest in essential works across our roads, footways, cycle routes and structures. The increase in future years is particularly positive. At the same time, we continue to face significant financial pressures as a council, and we must ensure that every pound is used as effectively as possible. This funding certainty will support us in doing just that.

"We are pleased to receive further funding to help us continue our work to improve bus services across the county. Making public transport more reliable and accessible remains an important priority for residents in Worcestershire.

"We also want walking, cycling and wheeling to become natural, convenient and attractive options for everyday journeys, whether that's getting to school, commuting to work or connecting to a railway station. This latest funding announcement will help us accelerate that work, ensuring our infrastructure keeps pace with the needs of our communities."

Further information on Worcestershire's highways maintenance programme and transport improvements can be found on the Travel and Highways pages of our website.

Worcestershire welcomes multi-year government funding for highways, active travel and bus service improvements | Worcestershire County Council

Free home improvements available for Worcestershire residents

Worcestershire County Council has received funding to help lower-income households reduce their energy use and save money on heating bills.

The Warm Homes: Local Grant scheme offers a range of fully funded improvements, including insulation, upgraded heating systems, heat pumps, solar panels and energy efficient windows and doors. A free technical survey will identify which measures are most suitable for each property.

Councillor Ian Cresswell, Worcestershire County Council's Cabinet Member for Environment and Communities, said: "I'm really pleased that we're now able to offer this scheme, which will help some of the county's most vulnerable residents make their homes warmer and reduce their energy bills.

“We are fully committed to supporting those in need across the county, and I’d strongly encourage anyone who thinks they might be eligible to find out more.”

To qualify, households must either have a gross annual household income of less than £36,000, receive means-tested benefits, or live in a pre-qualified post code area.

Eligible homes must have, or be assessed as having, an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D to G. The EPC assessment is provided free of charge.

The scheme is also open to private renters who meet the income and property criteria. Landlords must agree to the works. One property per landlord can be fully funded, with a 50% contribution required for any additional homes.

Worcestershire County Council is delivering the scheme in partnership with local energy charity Act on Energy, alongside Worcester City Council, Wychavon District Council and Malvern Hills District Council.

Rachel Jones, CEO at Act on Energy, said: “We’re pleased to be able to support Worcestershire residents on their journey to a warmer, more efficient home. The cheapest energy is the energy you don’t use, so improving energy efficiency not only lowers bills but helps the environment. A warm, dry home can have a direct impact on people’s quality of life, and we’re delighted to help make that possible.”

Residents in Redditch, Bromsgrove or Wyre Forest should visit their district council’s website for details of schemes available in their area.

If you think you might qualify, or know someone who might benefit, it’s easy to apply. For more information, full eligibility criteria and to register your interest, visit the Warm Homes Local Grant pages of our website.

To speak to an energy advisor, contact Act on Energy’s free advice line on 0800 988 2881.

Free home improvements available for Worcestershire residents | Worcestershire County Council

Andrew Cross
County Councillor, Warndon Parish Division

04/01/2026
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