



Wootton Wawen Ward District Cllr. Ian Shenton

Proud to represent Bearley, Mappleborough Green, Ullenhall, Wootton Wawen

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District Councillor's report Bearley Parish Council 16th March 2026

If you need to contact me, please email me as I aim to respond within 24 hours otherwise leave a message on my mobile phone. I am here to help you.

Officers and councillors have been focussed on budgets and counter proposals from the opposition parties over the last few weeks, but the budget was passed and will be voted on at the Council meeting today (the 23rd of February 2026).

- Stratford District Council increase in council tax 2.99%
- This results in an average Band D Council Tax figure of £87.42 for 2026/27.

An issue that I have is that despite SDC being swallowed up by a new unitary in April 2028 the budget being put forward by the LibDem administration includes 13 extra officers at a total cost of around £560k per annum and £1m on trying to improve housing to rent by buying and renovating empty properties.

Other plans include £326k for pedestrianising High Street in Stratford upon Avon and £500k to try and resolve the Housing Land Supply issue as, in my opinion, due to incompetence we are left with a supply of 2.74 years which is in breach of the government guideline of 5 years minimum, leaving us open to speculative applications for developers who will be more able to develop land in areas that we possibly did not want developing. There is also a public consultation on this issue – see further details on this in this report under the title of Consultations.

Garden waste Charges – Predictably the Lib Dems approved raising the charges for next year by another £2. The receipts from green waste will then be around £2.4m for a service that costs £1.2m. This is a revenue raising exercise for the Lib Dems or put another way a “tax” on residents for taking away your garden waste. The Conservative party have pledged that we will at the next opportunity (the Unitary elections) offer permits for £40 and commit to this for the following 4 years. When I first brought this charge in in 2021, I said that the charge of £40 was meant to cover the costs of providing the service and that it should not rise every year indefinitely. In these challenging times we should not be profiteering from residents to support other projects that give them little or no benefit whatsoever. We will reverse this if we are elected and in control of the new unitary.

Don't forget though, to renew your subscription before the end of this month otherwise your Garden waste bin will not be emptied.

Off street car parking in Council owned car parks – In the budget we proposed scrapping car park charges in our car parks for residents of Stratford, in an attempt to revitalise the local economy and encourage residents to shop within the Stratford District. The cost of this would be borne by visitors who would pay higher charges. Opposition councillors of the Green, Reform and Lib Dem parties working together ensured that this would not get approved despite the Chief Accountant (s151 officer) agreeing with us in private that this could work. We provided modelling to support the case but it was clear that despite being transparent and outlining the way this could be done in simple terms, the other parties do not care whether our shopping centres survive or fail or whether residents should be encouraged to shop locally, just as long as SDC have yet another revenue stream. This will also be a commitment for the Conservative party at the Unitary elections in May 2027.

Phone lines outage in Wootton Wawen – You may have experienced difficulty calling landline numbers in Wootton Wawen beginning 01564. This was due to a major outage and since the 27th of January many landlines, including mine, could not send or receive calls, the lines were literally “dead”. Openreach gave a number of completion dates and missed the targets they set of Monday 23rd February, 2nd March and the 9th of March but did appear to meet that last target of the 14th of March, last Saturday whereupon most, if not all lines seem to have been restored, 45 days after the problem first appeared.

This issue affected around 800 customers located in Wootton Wawen, Henley, and Preston Bagot.

I gave a radio interview to BBC Coventry and Warwickshire and appeared on BBC Midlands Today and Central TV to highlight and push the issue with Openreach. I also engaged our MP who wrote to the Openreach Chairman.

Markets – Don't forget that the Waterside Markets will operate each Sunday and the road from the junction of Bridge Street along to Sheep Street will be closed from 9am until 6pm each Sunday for the rest of this year.

South Warwickshire Local Plan

As you will know, **I oppose the proposed plans for 6,800 dwellings to be built on land between Bearley and Wilmcote** and have been working hard behind the scenes to gain support for the action group. This is an ill thought out proposal that will have massive consequences for the villages of Bearley and Wilmcote that will effectively cease to exist as villages and be subsumed by



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To address this,

the District Council is implementing a comprehensive Housing Land Supply Action Plan, agreed by [Cabinet in October 2025](#), focused on boosting supply and recovering a five-year position as quickly as possible.

A key early action is the publication of a draft Interim Policy Position Statement, which sets out:

- Which existing planning policies are now considered out of date.
- How national policy must be applied during this period.
- The implications for neighbourhood plans.
- The approach the District Council intends to take to encourage appropriate and deliverable housing proposals.

The District Council is now seeking views from residents, developers, parish councils, and other stakeholders before finalising the document. **The consultation is now open and will run until 5pm on Monday 9 March.**

The draft Interim Policy Position Statement is available to view [here](#).

Responses should be submitted via the online consultation form that can be found [here](#).

For more information please visit: [Five Year Housing Supply | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#) or by pasting this link into your web browser

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/news/news.cfm/current/1/item/138700>

A report on the outcomes of the consultation, together with the finalised statement, is expected to be considered by Cabinet on 13 April 2026.

Grants for Parishes preparing or updating a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) – The Conservative group at SDC have put forward a proposal as part of the budget process to give grants to parishes to help fund the preparation of NDP's or to update them. This was approved at the Council, meeting on the 23rd February 2026. It is clear from recent decisions by Officers and the Planning Committee that unless an NDP has specific housing allocations within it then despite the plan saying that new dwellings will only be allowed within a built up area boundary, this may not be the case because of what is called the "tilted balance". This effectively means that if the harm caused is less than the benefit it would be recommended for approval. If the PC of District Councillor object it is clear that the Planning Committee are likely to accept the officer's recommendation of approval. The "tilted balance" is more significant due to the lack of a 5-year Housing land supply, highlighted earlier in this report.

Funding Opportunities

Community Climate Change and Nature Fund Round Three is open for applications! - Stratford-on-Avon District Council introduced The Community Climate and Nature Fund (CCNF) in November 2023 and has since enabled the funding of a multitude of climate and biodiversity initiatives across Stratford-on-Avon District. Funded projects include the installation of solar panels and air source heat pumps, to pond restoration and flood prevention projects.

Round Three of the CCNF opened in May 2025 and will stay open until April 2026. All applications will be considered at the nearest appraisal date following their submission, the dates are as follows:

- 15th April 2026

For your application to be considered at the next appraisal date please submit your application by **5pm on Friday 15th April 2026**.

Please send any enquiries about the CCNF to: climate.emergency@stratford-dc.gov.uk.

Free trees for Town and Parish Councils - Town and Parish Councils have received an email from SDC's Sue Greenall, asking for expressions of interest to gauge the level of interest in a scheme for tree planting in their areas. If your Town or Parish Council has suitable areas of public or publicly accessible land and would be interested in applying for the grant and hasn't already responded to the email, please send the following information to sue.greenall@stratford-dc.gov.uk

- Name of the Town/Parish Council and contact details for scheme organiser.
- Show the proposed planting location(s) on a map.
- Confirm the number of trees and species that you would be looking to purchase and plant.
- Confirm who is the legal Landowner of the proposed planting area and whether permission for planting will need to be sought.

Once all expressions of interest are received and based on the information provided, an application form will be issued along with a list of conditions to be met and details of evidence that would be required.



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Warwickshire Rural Community Council (WRCC) – Last month I highlighted the fact that the WRCC had ceased trading and the potential impact on residents who were members of warm hubs (of which there are 43 registered warm hubs across Warwickshire), oil syndicate, used the meals on wheels service or the transport. I have not received any response from the former Chair and the Administrators to see if I can restart the syndicate and negotiate future funding with the former providers of funding for warm hubs. I will be putting forward a motion to the next full Council meeting on 13th April to try and get funding for warm hubs. I am personally trying to create a new heating oil syndicate to get cheaper heating oil for residents wherever they live within the district.

I now have a list of around 40 or so residents who have contacted me directly or indirectly to register their interest in a new oil syndicate but this is still only a fraction of those who use oil to heat and I would be happy to hear from anyone else that may be interested, at any time going forward.

Other News

Police report – Incidents of a public interest from the last week: -

ALCESTER Vehicle Crime. Kinwarton Road. Number plates stolen from car. Afternoon of the 10th of March. 0052 11/03/2026

OVERSLEY WOODS ASB. Oversley Woods - Graftons. At least two off road motorcycles using the woods causing a danger to horse riders and pedestrians. 2pm 8th March. 0192 08/03/2026

BIDFORD Burglary. Salford Road. Patio window smashed and entry gained to premises. Untidy search made. Unsure if anything stolen at the time of the report. Found and reported Friday 13th March. 0224 13/03/2026 Burglary. Wellington Road. Office property broken into and cash stolen. Found and reported 10th March. 0180 10/03/2026

MAPPLEBOROUGH GREEN Theft from Garden Centre. 6 large pots stolen by two males in a Blue Peugeot van with a registration number starting 'MV59'. Thursday 26th February. Crime number 23/9606/26

CLAVERDON Vehicle Crime. Henley Road. Grey Land Rover Defender stolen from car park. Two males from a Silver BMW seen at the scene at the time of the offence. 6.30pm 11th March. 0331 11/03/2026

ULLENHALL Vehicle Crime. Ullenhall Lane. Black Lexus 450 stolen without key. Between 12 midnight and 6am 11th March. 0048 11/03/2026

Stratford District Council takes action after company fails to meet legal safety requirements

- Stratford-on-Avon District Council is issuing a strong warning to landlords and property management companies after a local property management company was fined £750 for failing to meet legal safety requirements.

The Section 235 Notice*, served by the District Council's Private Sector Housing Team required the company to provide essential documentation, including Fire Risk Assessment certificates, to support an ongoing investigation into the safety and management standards of a local property in Alcester.

Despite clear statutory deadlines and multiple formal requests, the company failed to supply the required information. This obstruction hindered the District Council's ability to carry out its legal duties to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the property's occupants.

If you have any concerns about private rented accommodation in the district, please contact the District Council's Private Sector Housing Team on PSHT@stratford-dc.gov.uk or call 01789 260848. You can also report your concerns via our website [Private sector housing form | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)

Background information:

- *A Section 235 Notice under the Housing Act 2004, is a legal document issued by the Local Housing Authority to produce certain documents related to a property.