

Wootton Wawen Ward District Cllr. Ian Shenton

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

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District Councillor's report For Bearley Parish Council meeting 16th November 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.

Since the last report, the key issues that have arisen are still the **South Warwickshire Local Plan (SWLP) and the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)**

SWLP -The deadline for the regulation 19 submission i.e. our final plan plus the responses from the consultation, does not have to be submitted by the 31st December as the Government have given a 3-month extension to the 31st March 2027. The Chief Executive and the Officers now have to decide whether they want to make some last-minute amendments to the SWLP in the light of the responses. As of today, there is no firm decision on this, and I guess that it will need the input and agreement of all the Party Leaders. The letter from the Minister outlining this extension was received late last week.

The danger in my head is that changes could be made that haven't been agreed by the full Council although again I am assuming that the extraordinary Council meeting planned for December would be moved to March 2027.

I will keep you all updated on this as it progresses.

As I outlined in my previous report, I did not submit a response to the SWLP in writing as it would send mixed messages of on the one hand supporting it because of the removal of Bearley/Wilmcote and on the other hand against it in all other respects. Effectively I am neutral. However, at the final vote in December or March unless there is a major rewrite of the plan that is submitted to the Inspectorate, **I will be voting against it for the reasons highlighted in my previous report.** If any resident or business wishes to make representations to me about this then please get in touch as soon as possible as I am keen to hear other views.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) – In my previous reports I reported the following –

The Government has announced a review of its Local Government Reorganisation programme following updated legal advice. Warwickshire is one of 14 areas where proposals will be reviewed and paused while the Government considers whether the process is legally robust and aligned with its priorities. The Government has also confirmed that local elections scheduled for May 2027 will go ahead on existing council boundaries. This means the District elections will now go ahead instead.

The Minister has said the following over the last few days, in a letter to the Chief Executive of SDC.

Minded to decision for Warwickshire - Separately from the programme-level review, the Secretary of State and I, in my capacity as Minister for Local Government, Devolution and Regional Growth, are currently minded to implement the **two unitary proposal submitted by North Warwickshire Borough Council, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council.**

The proposal that we are currently minded to make would establish the following new councils, **with elections in May 2028, ahead of vesting in April 2029: Proposed new council**	**Existing local government areas forming proposed new council** (excluding county council)	**Current population**
North Warwickshire	North Warwickshire Borough Council, Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council Rugby Borough Council	323,000
South Warwickshire	Stratford-on-Avon District Council	295,000



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5 Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) – This has now increased from 2.2 years to 2.4 years, but we are still 2,900 houses short of having a 5YHLS so there is some way to go yet.

The reality is that because we have a deficient 5YHLS (it should be at least 5 years) developers are rushing to get plans through because it is difficult for the planners to refuse permission. This could see development at 3 sites in Wootton Wawen, these being **Blackford Mill**, Keyte Gardens, and Alcester Rd resulting in around 400 houses (265 of which could be approved at Blackford Mill) plus a further 450 houses in Mappleborough Green along with two small scale (less than 10 dwellings) in Ullenhall.

Add to this the number of permissions in Principle applications for sites up to 9 homes in Ullenhall and Bearley and you can see that SDC and the Wootton Wawen ward in particular is under attack from speculators and developers.

As you know Henley is due to take 2,200 homes as part of the South Warwickshire Local Plan.

Apart from Henley there appear to be no infrastructure improvements such as an expanded or satellite medical centre, improved train, and bus frequencies. Severn Trent would need to commit to improving capacity otherwise we will see more sewage spills. The data that the Wootton Wawen Action Group (WWAG) have supplied me is damming and indicates many spills of sewage into the River Alne around Wootton Wawen due to capacity issues

In the recent Council meeting, I seconded a motion put forward by the Green Party to press Government to make the Severn Trent a statutory consultee, meaning that if they don't have the capacity and plans to expand the sewage works at, say, Wootton Wawen, then all plans must recognise that the dwellings cannot be occupied until and unless the capacity is increased. This would have the effect of possible speculative applications being delayed or scrapped because no developer is going to build houses that have to be mothballed until the sewage system is proven to have enough capacity or capacity is increased. This matters because when the system reaches capacity the water authority could discharge directly into the River Alne.

Local Issues

26/02309/FUL - The Lairage - Scrap Yard – The main points of my objection were

- No EIA has been carried out It is incomprehensible that the effects on wildlife and habitat have not been considered.
- In the green belt and is unacceptable
- complaints about noise and operating during sleeping hours and is therefore anti-social behaviour. Trucks appear to be operating with loose chains or skips during the early hours as well as late in the day
- There is concern that the site is already contaminating watercourse and the surrounding land with chemicals, oil and sharp pieces of metal that could cause serious injury especially to children.
- The application is retrospective and coupled with other issues on the site should be resisted.
- If the planner is minded to grant I would expect that the operating hours are clearly defined so as not to cause a nuisance in the early or late hours. The hours should be restricted to commence after 7am in the morning and cease by 7pm at night or other such hours as can be agreed with the district councillor for Snitterfield and the parish councils of Snitterfield and Bearley.

26/01097/PIP Land at School Lane, Bearley – refused on the following grounds

- would result in an unacceptable and harmful change to the character and appearance of the application site and its rural village setting.
- would fail to suitably reflect, respect, or harmonise with the established rural character of Bearley
- the proposal would result in harm to the setting of and special significance of the Bearley Conservation Area and the Grade II Listed Manor House. Public benefits identified are not sufficient to outweigh the harm identified.



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Within the Wootton Wawen ward we have 3 substantial applications and one potential application. These are as follows:

- **Taylor Wimpey proposal Mappleborough Green –** 450 dwellings behind the school
- **Blackford Mill** 225 dwellings
- **Land off Alcester Road** – 65 dwellings
- **Keyte Gardens** – 85 dwellings (application not yet validated)

The ward is under attack from developers which could see the applications double the size of Mappleborough Green and increase the brick-built housing within Wootton Wawen by 80%. All of this is due to the 5year housing land supply issue as everyone of these applications is on what we could call green belt land and what developers will call (in the main) grey belt land,

Other News

Community/Warm Hub - Grant now open -In order to support existing and new warm and community hubs across the district, £25,000 is available to secure funds for venue hire, purchase of refreshments, entertainment, activities, and other running costs. **I have already applied for this on behalf of the Wootton Wawen Warm Hub.**

The following is important and qualifying residents should apply as soon as possible.

Cost of Living Support - Stratford-on-Avon District Council has launched an improved Cost of Living Support Referral Form to help residents quickly and easily access advice, support, and services during challenging financial times.

The District Council recognises that many people are facing increased pressures from rising living costs, concerns about household finances and the affordability of essential bills. Financial difficulties can have a significant impact on health and wellbeing, and the Council is committed to ensuring that residents can access the support they need as easily as possible.

The referral form provides a straightforward way for residents to connect with free advice, information and assistance from the Council and its partner organisations. Support is available across a range of areas, including:

- Money and financial support
- Housing and accommodation concerns
- Employment and job-seeking opportunities
- Training and skills development
- Health and wellbeing support
- Transport assistance

The form can be completed by residents themselves or by a family member, support worker, professional or other third party acting on their behalf with their consent.

Once submitted, residents will be referred to the most appropriate service or organisation based on the support they have requested. With the resident's permission, information provided through the form will be shared securely with the relevant Council team or partner organisation. They will then contact the resident directly to discuss the support available and help them access the services best suited to their individual circumstances.

For more details paste this link into the search facility on the SDC website Cost of Living Support | Stratford-on-Avon District Council or paste this into your browser bar https://www.stratford.gov.uk/benefits-support/cost-of-living-support.cfm?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=The%20Online%20View%20September%202026

Home Choice Plus - The new system launched last month, with applications being assessed in line with the new policy.

The key messaging for any residents during this period is:

- All existing applicants will also need to reapply from this date – they must do so in the first 6-week period if they wish to retain their original start date (as with the current policy, they will have a new effective start date if their banding increases but anyone on the same or a lower band will retain their existing start date)
- We will support applicants with re-registration where it is required – this will include offering appointments in Elizabeth House to complete their application and take copies of any documentation.
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- The former register closed for new applicants in mid-August, although existing applicants can continue to bid until 12th October
- The first properties under the new scheme will be advertised from 27 October 2026
- We will process applications as quickly as we can but as we do not know at what stage in the 6 weeks applicants will apply our usual assessment period will not apply – we chose not to give applicants a set timeframe in which to reregister, and therefore pace the work across this period, to provide applicants with greater flexibility
- Where an applicant is unhappy with their banding – their route to challenge this is by way of a statutory review. The Council has 56 days to complete this review
- Outside of this, where an applicant is unhappy with the service they receive – they can raise their concerns via the Council's complaints process

We have written to all current applicants advising them the re-registration process and to remind them of the need to reapply. You can find a series of FAQs here: Home Choice Plus | Stratford-on-Avon District Council - we have also issued wider communications including a press release and regular posts on social media. We will continue to issue reminders across the 6-week period.

If anyone is homeless, or at risk of homelessness, please direct them to contact us by phone (01789 260 126 / 01789 267 575), e-mail (homeless@stratford-dc.gov.uk) or by coming in to speak to us at Elizabeth House. If they are homeless in an emergency outside of our opening hours, please call 01789 267575 and select Option 3. The register closure will not impact us providing a service to anyone who is homeless.

Background to the above statement on Home Choice plus - The old system closed to new Housing Register applications on 17 August 2026 as part of the transition to Stratford-on-Avon Home Choice. Social Housing, also known as affordable housing, is for people who cannot afford or who cannot find suitable housing to rent or buy on the open market. As Stratford-on-Avon District Council does not own any housing stock, all social housing is provided by housing associations. Housing association properties that fall vacant are advertised and allocated through our housing register,

Council invests in new accommodation for vulnerable women - Stratford-on-Avon District Council has invested in a new women-only accommodation scheme to support those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The development provides self-contained accommodation with ensuite facilities and kitchenettes, creating a safe and supportive environment where residents can rebuild their independence. The project responds to growing demand for specialist accommodation. In 2025/26, the Council received 1,075 homelessness approaches, including 283 from single women.

The new facility will bridge the gap between emergency accommodation and independent living, helping residents access support while maintaining their independence. Stratford-on-Avon District Council provides advice and support to residents who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, contact the Council's Housing Advice and Homelessness Service:

- Telephone: 01789 260126 or 01789 267575
- Email: homeless@stratford-dc.gov.uk
- Visit: Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford-upon- Avon, CV37 6HX
- Out of hours emergency homelessness service: 01789 267575 (select Option 3)

Further information is available at: Homelessness & Threatened With Homelessness | Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Police Report

Local incidents of a public interest from the last week: -

- ASTON CANTLOW
  - Suspicious Circumstances. Aston Cantlow Road. Two males seen on private land with torches. When challenged they said they were looking for a phone. They had no reason to be there, and caller concerned regards their motives. 5.30pm Wednesday 11th November. 0347 11/11/2026
- BILLESLEY
  - Suspicious Circumstances. Upper Billesley. Noises heard outside property. When this was checked by the occupants, they disturbed two males dressed in black with face coverings outside, who then made off. But they returned about 40 minutes later and were chased off again. Around 2am - 2.40am Saturday 14th November. 0421 14/11/2026
- STUDLEY
  - Vehicle Crime x 2. Station Road. Two vans broken into. Various items of fishing equipment stolen. Between 4.30pm and 7.30pm Tuesday 10th November. 0343 10/11/2026
  - Theft. Store, Alcester Road, Shoplifter detained by staff and arrested by police. 2.50pm Tuesday 10th November. 0206 10/11/2026
- BEARLEY

- Burglary. Snitterfield Way. Premises entered through rear door and subsequently a Black BMW X5 estate was stolen. This was later found by police. Around 11.50pm Sunday 8th November. 0075 09/11/2026

- WOOTTON WAWEN
  - ASB. Mayswood Road. Three quad bikes have driven into woods, forcing past fence posts. The riders were wearing balaclavas. 12.15pm Tuesday 10th November. 0167 10/11/2026
- BEAUDESERT
  - Burglary. Premises entered and items stolen including alcohol and two-party box speakers. 3.10am 10th November. 0109 14/11/2026
- HENLEY
  - Suspicious Circumstances. Glenhurst Road. Dark Grey BMW with tinted windows seen acting suspiciously in the area. Around 7pm Tuesday 10th November. 0339 10/11/2026

Funding available

Funding for NDP's (neighbourhood development plans)- Stratford-on-Avon District Council is making £300,000 available to help Town and Parish Councils prepare new or update existing Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs), giving local communities a stronger voice in shaping future development.

There are currently 32 adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans across the District, and many are expected to require review as planning policies evolve and the emerging South Warwickshire Local Plan progresses. Neighbourhood Development Plans allow local communities to influence how their area develops, including housing, infrastructure, environmental priorities, design, and other matters that affect daily life. Once adopted, they form part of the development plan used in planning decisions.

The proposed funding follows the withdrawal of the former Government-backed Locality grant programme in 2025, which previously provided financial support to neighbourhood planning groups.

Under the recommended approach, eligible Town and Parish Councils are able to apply for funding based on demonstrated project costs and planned expenditure associated with either preparing a new NDP or reviewing their current NDP. Applications will be assessed to ensure funding is used effectively and delivers value for money.

Energy support fund opens for vulnerable residents - Residents struggling with rising energy bills can now access financial support through the Stratford Energy Support Fund. Administered by Act on Energy and funded by Stratford-on-Avon District Council, the scheme provides one-off grants of up to:

- £500 for eligible families
- £300 for eligible individuals and couples

Support is available towards gas, electricity, oil, and LPG costs for households meeting income and vulnerability criteria.

Income criteria:

- Gross household income of up to £31,000 (not including PIP or DLA)
- No household savings

- Vulnerabilities typically include:
  - Long term diagnosed and treated health conditions e.g. COPD
  - Households with unmanageable debt
  - Pregnant or have young children under the age of five
  - Disabled and in receipt of DLA or PIP
  - In receipt of related benefits related (not universal) free school meals
  - Other vulnerabilities disclosed by households not on the list but accepted at Act on

Energy's discretion Residents can find full eligibility details at www.actonenergy.org.uk/support/sesf or contact

Act on Energy on 0800 988 2881.

Further funding schemes are available on the Act on Energy website: https://www.actonenergy.org.uk/area/warwickshire