Cllr. Bruton MHDC Report

Appendix 2

Cllr Lesley Bruton (Tenbury Ward)

Shop Local Campaign

The Economic Development team have produced a Shop Local campaign flier promoting the shops and services in Tenbury. Included on the flier is a QR code for a survey and website link, to gain feedback from residents. The survey has been designed to gain valuable feedback from residents about where they shop, why they visit the town centre, find out what might prevent them from shopping in the town and ask what would encourage them to spend more in the town. There are also questions to gather feedback on parking and asking how current economic pressures are impacting on residents spending and choices they make.

The flier will be delivered to 7,000 households and will take up to three weeks. Once the Shop Local campaign is being delivered, hard copies of the questionnaire will be made available for people who prefer a paper copy and they will need to be returned to the Tourist Information office on Teme Street by 31st July, when the survey closes.

There will be five vouchers as prizes, to be used at independent businesses in the town centre, to encourage residents to provide feedback.

The team is also working on another visit Tenbury Wells reel that will be shared shortly. Look out for the reel on Visit The Malverns social media.

Local Government Reorganisation

A campaign for a Local Government Reorganisation Programme Director went live last week, with adverts appearing via the MJ, Guardian online and LinkedIn. The campaign is also supported by a microsite: www.solacerecuits.co.uk/LGR-PD where candidates can access more details on the role and after registering their interests, can access full details of the role profile and the recruitment process. Solace in Business are working in partnership with WM Employers to support this recruitment and will be undertaking executive search activity alongside the advertised campaign. The campaign is supported by all the Worcestershire authorities.

Recently, representatives from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government together with senior officers undertook a tour of Worcestershire, which highlighted the difference between the north and south of the county.

Town Centre Grant Scheme

A new Town Centre Support Scheme has been launched.

Eligible businesses can apply for a 50% match-funded grant of up to £2,500 towards a range of improvements and development opportunities:

- Shop Front Improvements
- New Trader Support
- Development and Sustainability Grant

Businesses interested in applying can find full details, guidance notes and the application form here.

For further information before applying, businesses can email towncentre@malvernhills.gov.uk

New Short Course for Manufacturing Technicians

A new, specialist course supporting manufacturing and engineering technicians and their growth businesses is coming to the Malvern Hills district.

Aimed at plugging skills gaps highlighted by high growth specialist manufacturers, the work-focused course has been designed by the New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering (NMITE) in Hereford to meet specific needs.

The new short course, focusing on Manufacturing and Systems Optimisation, is being part-funded by Malvern Hills District Council and will be delivered over 14 weeks. It will start on 23rd October 2026 and finish at the end of February 2027 costing £1,500 per student.

This course is aimed at employees who have either completed an apprenticeship, or who are long-serving employees, such as Production Line Operators, looking at further development.

Early registration and information about the course are available on the CPD section of NMITE's website.

www.nmite.ac.uk

The New Renters Rights Act

The new Renters Rights Act came into force on 1 May 2026.

These changes have been designed to make renting fairer, safer and more secure. It will change how private renting works and gives tenants stronger rights.

For more information, please visit www.malvernhills.gov.uk/housing/housing-advice

Measles

Cases of measles are rising in our area. Public Health colleagues have issued the following advice.

- Measles spreads very easily. In some cases, it can make you very ill and lead to serious health problems if it spreads to other parts of the body, such as the lungs and brain.
- Check the list of symptoms to know what to look for. If you think you or your child may have measles or any of the symptoms, call your GP surgery or NHS 111 first, before turning up at a healthcare setting. This will help stop the virus from spreading.
- Having the MMRV or MMR vaccine is the best way to prevent yourself from becoming very ill.
- Ask at your GP surgery if you are not sure you or your child has had either of these vaccines. Your GP can vaccinate you for free on the NHS.

Visit the NHS website for more information on the symptoms, vaccination, and what to do if you think you have measles or have come into contact with someone with measles.

Rising Oil and LPG Heating Costs

If you are a Worcestershire low-income household and struggling with rising oil or LPG heating costs the local Worcestershire Advice Network (WAN) partner can offer free, confidential advice and support through the Alternative Fuel – Oil and LPG Home Energy Support scheme,

The contact details of the nearest WAN partner, including Citizens Advice, Age UK and Disability Advice Line are available at: www.worcestershireadvicenetwork.org.uk

Government Planning Sanction

You will no doubt have seen that Malvern Hills District Council has received notification from the Government that Malvern Hills and Wychavon are now designated under Section 62A of the Town and Country Planning Act.

The designation follows the number of major planning applications refused by both councils that were later allowed on appeal during a monitoring period covering 2023 to 2025.

As a result, developers submitting certain major planning applications can now choose to apply directly to the Planning Inspectorate rather than through either council. This will impact our income but more importantly, means the Council may lose control over certain major decisions affecting both districts.

Planning applications already submitted to either council will continue to be determined by us, as will smaller planning applications and those submitted by householders.

While we recognise there were performance challenges during the period used for the assessment, we strongly disagree with the Government's decision because we do not believe it reflects the planning service operating today.

Over the last two years, significant improvements have been made. Following a major restructure, backlogs have been eliminated, new processes introduced and additional support provided to councillors. A dedicated team has also been established to oversee major applications.

Thanks to the hard work, professionalism and commitment of everyone in the service, we have transformed planning performance at both Malvern Hills and Wychavon.

The results of that work are clear with more recent performance data showing successful appeals running well below the Government's designation threshold of ten per cent. More importantly our progress has been independently recognised by the Royal Town Planning Institute with the title of West Midlands Planning Team of the Year shortlisting for a national award. This says more than any Government decision.

The Council will continue to make the case to Government to have this unfair sanction removed as swiftly as possible, whilst considering other available options including a legal challenge.

Shop Local Tenbury Wells

The Economic Development Team is supporting businesses in Tenbury Wells with a new four-page A4 leaflet promoting the town centre's shops, cafés, restaurants and local services to help encourage more residents to visit and shop locally.

More than 7,000 copies have been delivered to households across the WR15 postcode area and surrounding communities, with a further 2,000 distributed to local businesses.

The campaign is also supported by a double-page feature in the July edition of the Teme Valley Times.

The initiative was developed in response to concerns raised by traders about the impact of recent roadworks on customer footfall.

The leaflet also includes a residents' survey to gather feedback on local issues and opportunities, helping to shape future improvements that will encourage more people to visit the town centre.

Survey link here: Have your say on Tenbury Town Centre – deadline 31 July 2026.

Please also see leaflet attached.

Town Centre Videos

The Economic Development Team have created new videos to support our town centre traders.

Working in collaboration with businesses five new videos have been produced in house showcasing our town centres and all the independent businesses they have to offer.

The videos have been very well received so far gaining over ¼ of a Million views.

An extra promotional video has been made for Tenbury Wells in response to trader feedback.

Views across META platforms since publication

Great Malvern: 66,197

Malvern Link: 99,403

Barnards Green: 54,105

Upton upon Severn: 98,173

Tenbury Wells Traders: 15,699

Tenbury Wells overview: 51,511 views

County-wide survey launched to understand public perceptions of air quality

Residents are being invited to complete a survey about air pollution by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), delivered in partnership with Worcestershire County Council.

The questionnaire aims to capture insights into issues like awareness and use of local air quality tools, lifestyle changes to improve air quality, and communication preferences on the important topic.

People can visit **www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/all-services/pollution/air-quality** to take part.

The survey closes on 31 July 2026 and anyone over 16 can complete it.

New tool to help residents fight fly-tipping

A new tool designed to make it easier for residents to avoid rogue waste carriers and help tackle fly-tipping has been launched by Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Councils.

WasteGuard is a free online service that allows residents to obtain quotes from waste carriers who have been checked for a valid licence and responsible waste disposal practices at the time of listing.

By choosing a provider from WasteGuard, residents can be confident they have met their legal obligation under the Household Waste Duty of Care to ensure their rubbish is disposed of responsibly. People are free to use waste carriers not signed up to the scheme but are encouraged to follow the SCRAP code.

The code advises residents to:

- Suspect all waste carriers
- Check they are authorised and have a waste carrier's licence
- Refuse unexpected offers
- Ask where the waste is going
- Paperwork – obtain proof like a receipt or waste transfer note.

Anyone who doesn't follow SCRAP and whose waste is later found to have been illegally dumped could be issued with a £600 Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution and a court fine of up to £5,000.

Three companies have already signed up to WasteGuard, but it is hoped more will join in the future. The new service is part of both councils' wider "Who's taking your waste out?" campaign.

Featuring a series of eye-catching adverts showing people on unusual dates with commonly fly-tipped items such as sofas, used tyres and bags of rubbish, the campaign highlights that everyone is responsible for knowing who is taking their waste and where it is ending up.

Hilton Clearance, based in Kempsey and launched in 2024, was the first waste carrier company to sign up to the WasteGuard service.

Visit **www.malvernhills.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/wasteguard** or **www.wychavon.gov.uk/environmental-crime/wasteguard** to find out more

Update on repeal of Vagrancy Act

The Vagrancy Act has formally been repealed. This draws a clear line under that history and reflects a simple principle: no one should be criminalised for not having somewhere safe to live.

Replacement legislation focused on facilitating begging and trespass with intent to commit a crime has also come into force.

As outlined in A National Plan to End Homelessness, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government are committed to work with councils to define consistent expectations on effective and proportionate engagement and enforcement to address persistent anti-social or harmful behaviour in a rough sleeping context, where necessary.

Please see further information here: Rough sleeping no longer a crime as Vagrancy Act repealed - GOV.UK.

Organisations urged to help identify women experiencing rough sleeping

Local organisations are being asked to help MHDC build a more accurate picture of women's rough sleeping and hidden homelessness across the district.

Charities, community groups, housing providers, health services, domestic abuse services, outreach teams and other frontline organisations are being invited to attend an informal online drop-in session ahead of the national Women's Rough Sleeping Census in September.

The drop-in will explain what the census involves, why local insight is important, and how organisations that may meet women who are rough sleeping, have recently slept rough, or are staying in unsafe or hidden locations can support the work.

The online drop-in session will take place at:

- 2pm on Friday, 10 July 2026

Organisations interested in attending should email Sophie Cooper, Domestic Abuse Outreach Officer at **Sophie.Cooper@wychavon.gov.uk**.

More information about the census is available from Solace Women's Aid and Single Homeless Project.

Visit **www.solacewomensaid.org/womens-rough-sleeping-census/** for more information about the census.

The King's Birthday 2027 Honours Round

Please submit your nominations for The King's Birthday 2027 Honours round by Friday 7 August 2026.

Nominations should be submitted using this online form and in addition to this, at least two letters of support are needed for each nomination.

Please reply to the acknowledgment email you will receive when submitting your nomination and send your letters of support attached to that reply, or alternatively if the acknowledgement email is not received, email the letters to honours@communities.gov.uk making it clear in the subject heading which nomination the letters relate to.

Contact honours@communities.gov.uk if you need any help or advice.

The Cabinet Office website has useful information on nominations: How to nominate - UK Honours System (cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

Free meal plan service to all residents

The District Council has partnered with award-winning meal planning platform FiveDinners, to help residents plan meals more easily, reduce food waste and manage household costs.

Through the initiative, residents can access a free premium year-long membership to FiveDinners.com (normally £86 per year). The platform provides personalised weekly meal plans, tailored to individual needs and preferences, including options for amilies, low-calorie diets and other dietary requirements.

Residents who sign up will join more than 30,000 existing members using the service, with access to a wide range of meal plans designed to suit different lifestyles and cooking experience.

With a weekly household food waste collection service being rolled out across the Malvern Hills district from October 2026, we are encouraging residents to take simple steps to reduce waste at home.

Using FiveDinners, households can plan ahead, shop more efficiently and make better use of the food they buy.

Residents can sign up at: **www.FiveDinners.com/MyCommunity** by selecting Malvern Hills District Council and entering their postcode.

Successful projects under the Malvern Hills Growth Fund

Following its successful launch in April 2026, the Malvern Hills Growth Fund has attracted strong interest from local businesses.

Fully funded by Malvern Hills District Council, the Fund is designed to support micro, small and medium-sized businesses across the district, helping them to invest in activities that drive growth.

This can include purchasing new equipment, expanding facilities, creating jobs, and improving productivity.

Grants of between £500 and £15,000 are available, depending on the nature of the project and the type of business applying. Businesses are required to provide at least 50% match funding towards their project costs.

Further information about the Fund, including a link to the online application form, is available at www.malvernhills.gov.uk/growth.

Local Measles Update

The following is an update from Lisa McNally, the Director of Public Health, who would like to emphasise that, although very good progress has been made, we cannot be complacent and must avoid communications that suggest the risk has passed.

We are seeing signs that the measles surge is slowing.

The last few weeks have seen intensive action to achieve this, including:

- System wide incident management coordinated by the Public Health Team
- Detailed epidemiological work to guide the response
- Enhanced infection control measures in NHS settings and the University
- Outreach to increase MMR vaccination rates, especially in adults
- Regular, targeted communications

While the slowing of the epi curve is undoubtedly good news, these actions must continue in order to reduce the risk of a second surge in cases.

A second surge is made more likely by the nature of the virus, including its very high infectivity and long incubation period (21 days). This is despite Worcestershire having a (relatively) small susceptible population due to high vaccine uptake rates.

Public Health will continue to monitor the situation daily and coordinate the response.

Decision - Local Government Reorganisation

As you will be aware, the Government has today confirmed plans for the future of local councils in Worcestershire.

From 1 April 2028, the county's current seven borough, city, district and county councils will be replaced with two unitary councils: one covering North Worcestershire and one covering South Worcestershire.

The decision follows Government consultation and consideration of the two proposals submitted for reorganisation in Worcestershire.

Visit our dedicated web page www.malvernhills.gov.uk/about-your-council/local-government-reorganisation for more information.

Five-year housing land supply

The councils have now published an updated five-year housing land supply report on 30 June 2026 incorporating the most recent monitoring data. The report details how the councils are able to demonstrate a 5.48 year supply with a 20% buffer.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) requires at Paragraph 78 c) that a 20% buffer is included on the five-year housing land supply from 1 July 2026 where an adopted Local Plan has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a previous version of the NPPF, and whose annual average housing requirement is 80% or less of the most up-to-date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance.

Paragraph 78 c) is now engaged for the South Worcestershire Councils, due to the adoption of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review in March 2026.

For more information or to read the report, please use this link: Monitoring Reports - South Worcestershire Development Plan.

Supplementary Planning Documents

The councils have now adopted a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which will provide additional detail on how policies within the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review are implemented.

The adopted SPDs which cover all of South Worcestershire are:

- Air Quality SPD
- Affordable Housing SPD
- Developer Contributions SPD

Additional SPDs have also been adopted, including two that are specific to Wychavon District:

- Wychavon Design Code
- Wychavon Town Spatial Framework SPD

No new SPDs can be introduced after 30 June 2026 due to the implementation of legislative changes introduced in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

However, adopted SPDs will remain in force until an authority adopts a new-style Local Plan.

To view the joint SPDs please use this link - Supplementary Planning Documents - South Worcestershire Development Plan; for Wychavon District specific, please use this link - Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents - Wychavon District Council

Support for apprenticeships

Apprenticeship Employer Grants

Apprenticeships are vital to businesses because they provide a practical route to develop skilled, motivated employees while helping employers address skills gaps, improve productivity and build a sustainable workforce for the future.

To encourage more businesses to take on apprentices a new scheme has been launched; the Malvern Hills Apprenticeship Employer Grant Scheme.

Grants of £1,500 per apprentice (for up to 2 apprentices) are available to businesses within the district and more information can be found at Grants & funding - Worcestershire Apprenticeships

Apprentice Bursary

The Council recognises that trainees may struggle to cover the cost of travel or equipment to access their work or training and that this may prevent them from applying for certain jobs.

Malvern Hills District Council funded bursaries of up to £500 are available through Worcestershire Apprenticeships.

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The leaflet also includes a residents' survey to gather feedback on local issues and opportunities, helping to shape future improvements that will encourage more people to visit the town centre.

WasteGuard

The Council has launched a new service to help residents avoid rogue waste traders and tackle fly-tipping.

WasteGuard lets residents find waste carriers quickly and easily.

Companies signed up to WasteGuard must:

- ✅ Be licensed
- ✅ Provide the right paperwork
- ✅ Be using legal disposal routes

Using WasteGuard helps residents meet Household Waste Duty of Care and avoid a potential fine if their waste is fly-tipped.

Find out more:www.malvernhills.gov.uk/wasteguard.