District Councillor Report

Stoke Bliss Kyre and Bockleton Group Parish Council

Meeting 2 November 2026

Reporting period 3 August to 1 November 2026

Cllr Duane Hubbard – Tenbury Wells Ward, Malvern Hills District Council

B4204 Rochford landslip and diversion routes

Since my last report, residents have provided further accounts of the difficulties caused by the Rochford closure, including longer journeys, increased fuel costs, failed deliveries and concerns about access to medical appointments, hospital transport and ambulance services. This adds to the evidence of the closure's impact on surrounding communities.

I have used this further evidence to follow up the question I raised with the Leader at MHDC Full Council. I have asked him to approach Worcestershire County Council and the Cabinet Member responsible for highways to establish why the requested public updates have not been forthcoming. I am working with County Councillor Justin Bowen and other councillors in pressing for these updates, as well as on several other local highway matters across the ward.

The continuing lack of information is causing growing frustration and anxiety locally. Residents deserve to know what work has been completed, what is happening now and what the next steps are, even where a reopening date cannot yet be confirmed. I have pressed for a clear, dated public update.

Local infrastructure replacement

BT/Openreach and Severn Trent are upgrading their networks and infrastructure in villages around Tenbury. These works are causing additional disruption and frustration, particularly where they affect routes already carrying diverted traffic because of the Rochford closure. They are nevertheless much-needed improvements, intended to provide a more reliable water supply with fewer leaks and repairs, alongside improved fibre broadband and communications for residents.

Church Lane Stoke Bliss

Following concerns raised by residents, I reported the condition of the lane past Church Farm towards Church Close, where the road appears to be sinking, raising concerns about the potential for a further landslip. The additional traffic using surrounding lanes during the Rochford closure makes this particularly concerning.

Highways has inspected the location and an edge-of-carriageway scheme has been proposed. I do not yet have a confirmed date for the work. The reported movement should not be described as a confirmed landslip without an engineering assessment, but I will continue to seek a timetable and any necessary interim measures.

B4214 Bromyard Road culverts and drainage

I am currently pursuing two culvert issues on the B4214 Bromyard Road. At Sutton, opposite Vine Lane, the concerns include vegetation and obstruction restricting flow. The outstanding landowner contact details have now been obtained, and clearance is expected shortly.

The other pressing issue concerns the culvert further along near Simply Stoves, which is due to be replaced with a larger culvert. This work cannot proceed while the road is required as a diversion for the Rochford closure and will need to wait until the landslip has been repaired and the road reopened.

Postal services

Following my visit to the Burford delivery office, I have been gathering residents' accounts of delayed and missing post, including concerns about medical correspondence and missed appointments. Local postal staff have described staffing shortages and difficulties maintaining regular deliveries on their rounds.

I have collated these accounts and written to the CEO of Royal Mail, the Communication Workers Union and Ofcom. I am awaiting their responses before deciding on further escalation.

This remains an ongoing matter, with residents continuing to report the same difficulties. I have asked why the recruitment plans outlined earlier in the year have not resolved the staffing shortages, and what practical action Royal Mail will take to restore a reliable service.

Local government reorganisation

Since my last report, when reorganisation was paused for a Government review, MHDC has circulated a further update dated 29 October. The Government is now minded to proceed with two unitary authorities for North and South Worcestershire, with implementation in April 2029. A final decision is expected before Christmas.

The timetable provided confirms that Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Council elections will proceed in May 2027. Elections to the shadow unitary councils would take place in May 2028, followed by the new authorities taking over on 1 April 2029. Worcestershire's councils are continuing joint preparatory work while maintaining existing services.

Tenbury property flood resilience scheme

The Tenbury Property Flood Resilience Scheme is progressing. The FloodMobile drop-in event at Tenbury Community Swimming Pool car park on 14 October gave residents the opportunity to see property flood protection measures demonstrated and discuss the scheme with the Environment Agency, RAB Consultants and Whitehouse Construction. The event received a good response, and further properties are still being referred for consideration for inclusion in the scheme.

Tenbury Flood Warden Scheme

The Flood Wardens continue to be proactive in checking drains, following up reports of blockages and raising any maintenance needs with the relevant teams. They are also actively seeking additional volunteers and plan to hold a recruitment event in the next couple of weeks.

Please contact me with any outstanding parish matters or individual concerns that need district council involvement.

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