

Parish Briefings – December

Q & A

1. Using the HC website to report-it can be very cumbersome

The HC website is run and maintained by Hoople on behalf of Herefordshire Council. They are aware that it could be improved, and several meetings have been held recently to discuss potential improvements.

2. PROW footbridges, do they all come with gates like the picture in the presentation?

It depends on what was there previously – we will provide like for like replacement.

3. Who is responsible for muddy/wet areas on footpaths across fields?

Depends but is usually the landowner.

4. Sandbags – why don't HC/BBLP supply them any longer?

Decision was taken by HC several years ago, as sandbags are needed to be kept for strategic locations. Residents are encouraged to make their own provision.

5. Who decides which roads are resurfaced?

HC/BBLP use an asset management approach which prioritises roads for resurfacing treatments. Details on the HC website

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200196/roads/236/highway_asset_management_and_maintenance/2

6. Can anything be done about large agricultural vehicles who cause damage to edges of roads or ditches?

We would need evidence of the damage being undertaken but potentially can charge back for repairing it.

7. Who instructs the snow contractors?

BBLP do. We have approx. 40 around the county who are responsible for a certain area. When we have a snow event we instruct them to go out.

8. Drainage – Can you explain how you prioritise the drainage schemes?

These are prioritised on safety first against budget, but we have new priorities coming in all the time meaning that ranking of a scheme may change.

9. How many pothole defects are repeat repairs?

Repeat repairs are required on poor stretches of road where we cannot cut out. We have had success with the Spray Injection repair machine, however we cannot use it in bad weather or urban areas. We have a new Velocity Patcher/Gritter combination vehicle which has recently been purchased.

10. Do You know where all the gullies are located within the county?

Approximately 15,000 were known and we have located another 15,000. Every time we locate one, it is cleansed and recorded. The team have a metal detector to aid locating new gullies.

11. Are riparian owners still responsible for maintaining ditches? The CLA have seen the leaflet and have pushed back.

Yes. HC is clear that landowners should meet their riparian responsibilities.

12. Who is responsible for brooks/streams etc?

Could be the EA, the landowner or the Drainage Board.

13. Trees, if you don't maintain trees regularly, it causes more issues in the long run.

We hope to put more funding into trees in the future and we are hoping to tag trees as assets as part of the ongoing tree surveys that are carried out.

14. Do you have an Ash dieback plan?

This has been raised as a risk and the impact is being monitored through regular tree surveys. We believe it is currently spreading down the A49 corridor.

15. During the recent flooding, someone was stuck in floodwater and it took one hour to get through on your call centre. Would it be possible for parishes to deploy their own flood boards/closures?

We would need to consider how this could be managed as closing roads is covered by a legal procedure.

16. Do you ever review primary gritting routes?

Additions are fed in for review in the summer but it is a policy decision on routes. This depends on a number of factors and a road being on a school bus route isn't at present enough to change a route.

17. SID's – is there a consultancy service for sighting etc? Why aren't decent batteries included? The ones that are supplied are not fit for purpose and run out of charge too quickly.

Yes, the Traffic Management Team are available for help and advice. When defective batteries are reported to us we send our replacements, but we are aware existing batteries are coming to end of life and will look at procuring new batteries.

18. The Parish was concerned over the costs of assessments for the placement of a SID which seems to be high. Why is this?.

Assessments determine a project's feasibility and provide access to advice and information to enable the parish to make an informed final decision. Policy decision as taken several years ago by HC that all costs associated with SID related activity is recoverable.

19. Could this be graduated on a scale, taking into account parish council finances? Should Herefordshire Council contribute to the costs?

Funding can be identified from other sources, for example, there is a scheme that the Police and Crime Commissioner has that can contribute up to 50% of costs. Parishes could also look to increase precepts for special projects with agreement by their residents.

20. We were concerned on the length of time it took to receive our road sign quotes through Community Commissioning projects?

Community Commissioning follows a process that has been agreed by Herefordshire Council and Balfour Beatty Living Places to ensure all necessary governance is in place for protection of all parties. Please refer to the Community Commissioning Toolkit. We have been aware that this has led to longer lead times on projects, and are looking at the process to see if this can be improved.

21. Can parishes use their own contractor to carry out Community Commissioning projects without BBLP being used?

Yes. This would be Option 4 of the Approvals and delivery stage. Parishes could supply materials and deliver the works themselves or through a contractor, but the supervision and inspection would still have to be carried out by BBLP on behalf of Herefordshire Council. This is to ensure that the work and materials is of the necessary standard and complies with statutory regulations.

22. When I contact the steward, I am told to report issues online or 01432 261800.

The steward should be the first port of call for advice but defects etc. can be reported via the Report It App or on the telephone 01432 261800. Reporting through Report It ensures the defect gets into our system quicker and ensures that stewards can focus their time on the more complex issues.