

Bayston Hill Parish Council Report
27th April 2026

Local Update

I'm really pleased to share some fantastic news that the Three Fishes pub is now beginning to be rebuilt.

Following discussions with the regional manager, it has been confirmed that designated residents' parking will be provided for the cottages that have historically relied on parking at the site. This is a very positive outcome and the result of a lot of hard work behind the scenes, with residents, myself and other stakeholders all working together constructively.

The rebuild is expected to take approximately 21 weeks.

I'm sure many in the community will welcome the return of the Three Fishes, particularly as it is encouraging to see that community needs are being considered alongside commercial plans.

I recently had the pleasure of visiting the fantastic charity Little Stars, founded by one of our own village residents, Leanne Farlie, CEO and Founder of the organisation. I was joined by Councillor Alex Wagner, Deputy Leader of Shropshire Council, so that we could better understand their work and explore how we can support the charity going forward.

Little Stars provides essential items to children across Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin, including clothing, toys, baby equipment, toiletries and school uniforms. Their work supports families at some of the most challenging times in their lives, ensuring that no child goes without the basic essentials they need.

It was incredibly inspiring to see first-hand the difference the charity is making, with demand for their support continuing to grow across the county.

Like many charities, Little Stars relies on volunteers and ongoing funding, and there is a clear need for continued support from the wider community.

We will continue to work closely with Leanne and her team to support their efforts in any way we can.

I recently attended my first meeting of Shropshire SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) in my role as a Shropshire councillor member and found it a really interesting and worthwhile experience. One of the key discussions was the review of the updated Religious Education syllabus, which will be coming into place shortly following detailed consideration. SACRE plays an important role in ensuring that RE in our schools is balanced, inclusive and reflective of our communities and it was fascinating to see that work in action.

I also recently organised a meeting with our local Safer Neighbourhood Team. We met to discuss local concerns and hear updates from Speedwatch and Neighbourhood Watch, who were also present. We are planning to hold regular meetings going forward to help maintain strong community engagement and ensure that local concerns and feedback continue to be shared.

The team are hoping to arrange more drop-in sessions and increase their visibility within the village, although it is important to recognise that they cover a very wide area. If you do have any concerns, please do let me know as I can raise these at future meetings.

You can also report incidents directly — if you see something happening, please report it at the time by calling 101, or in an emergency please call 999. You can also report online via the West Mercia Police website or through Crimestoppers. The sooner something is reported, the better the chance there is of action being taken.

I was very disappointed to learn how disruptive the Arriva 27 bus service for Bayston Hill has been recently. Thank you to all residents who have taken the time to report services that have not turned up. I have submitted a full and detailed report and included the Cabinet Member for Transport in my correspondence with Arriva.

I will continue to press for improvements, as this level of service is not acceptable for a village of our size where many people rely on buses for work, appointments and social activities. Please do let me know if you experience similar issues, as consistent reporting is key to ensuring that action is taken.

With regard to the two major current planning applications in Bayston Hill, there have been some updates.

For land South of Jarvis Drive (reference: 26/00321/OUT), several consultees have now raised concerns, particularly in relation to access. This is especially significant given that the proposed access point would affect an oak tree at the top of the drive, which is now protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

For land North of New Pulley Lane (reference: 25/04875/OUT), concerns continue to be raised around flooding. The Environment Agency has indicated that some of the flood data used by the applicant may now be outdated following the flooding events of 2023–24.

You can view all comments on both applications via the planning portal by searching using the site locations or reference numbers. Residents can also submit their own comments up until a decision is made or the application is determined at committee.

Shropshire Council Update

Shropshire Council and partners have launched the new Shropshire Wellbeing and Navigation Network (SWANN), a preventative support service for adults aged 18 and over. The service aims to help residents maintain independence, improve wellbeing and stay connected within their communities. It brings together support around hospital discharge, community mental health and wider wellbeing, offering practical help, social opportunities and early intervention to reduce the need for more intensive services.

The Council has also confirmed a one-year extension of its highways contract with Kier Group through to April 2027. This is intended to support the Council's move towards a more flexible, mixed approach to highways delivery while maintaining day-to-day services across the county.

A new Crisis and Resilience Fund has been launched to support residents facing financial hardship. Running from April 2026 to March 2029, the scheme is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions and provides around £3.67 million per year to Shropshire, alongside additional short-term funding to support households reliant on heating oil.

The fund is available to a wide range of low-income households, not just those on benefits, and can help with essential costs such as food, energy, housing, transport and basic household items.

Residents can find more information and apply by searching "Shropshire Crisis and Resilience Fund" online.

Alongside these developments, new analysis from the Rural Services Network highlights significant and growing financial pressures for Shropshire. Government funding is projected to fall by around 10% between 2025/26 and 2028/29, compared to a smaller reduction across similar rural councils and an increase nationally. On a per-person basis, funding in Shropshire is already below both rural and national averages and is expected to fall further, widening the gap.

This creates an increasing structural funding challenge, particularly as demand for services continues to rise due to an ageing population and the additional costs of delivering services across a large rural county. While efficiencies have been recognised, including in adult social care, the Council continues to face a "triple squeeze" of falling government support, rising demand and higher delivery costs. Work is ongoing to address this through service transformation and greater collaboration with town and parish councils.