Cllr's Alan Holford and Gary Groves update for Ward Town & Parish Councils Mid-November 2026

Dear Councillors,

Please find a written summary report of goings on relevant to the ward for you to read. Rather than timing these for specific meetings I will aim to send one approximately monthly and then we can answer any questions during meetings.

Apologies this is 6 weeks since the last report; I have been unwell for the last 10 weeks which is restricting my ability to keep pace. This is looking likely to continue to hamper me for the next 3-6 months while I access improved treatments but I will do my best to keep up when I can and appreciate your patience. It is always best to direct emails to both Gary and I, so that whomever gets to it first can respond.

Many thanks,

Alan

Relevant News Items:

Flagship event to launch new blueprint for employer skills support - Shropshire Council Newsroom – Business leaders breakfast

Shropshire's gritting teams ready for cold winter weather - Shropshire Council Newsroom

News from our partners: New Think campaign encourages local people to stay well and get the right help, right time, first time this winter - Shropshire Council Newsroom

News from our partners: National Housing Order declared to protect birds from Avian Influenza - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Cabinet to consider next steps towards financial recovery and support for residents - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Free trees available across Shropshire and Telford through nature recovery scheme - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Pothole repairs to continue as highways teams prepare for winter - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Chance for schools to bid for up to £1000 of active travel funding - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Cabinet asked to approve library service consultation - Shropshire Council Newsroom

New research highlights challenges facing young people as Shropshire Community Foundation champions local youth projects - Shropshire Council Newsroom

UKSPF funding delivers wide-ranging benefits across Shropshire - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Shropshire featured in Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2026 – Health in Rural Areas and Small Towns - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Grant Thornton report recognises progress while setting out significant challenges - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Shropshire business grants deliver jobs, growth and new investment - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Santa's Little Stars 2026 campaign launched to help provide Christmas gifts - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Shrewsbury Park and Ride services from Monday 2 November - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Marches Forward Partnership is "UK's most significant rural growth partnership" - Shropshire Council Newsroom

News from our partners: Together4Children asks local people to think about adoption - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Shropshire Council awards new Adult Autism Support Contract to A4U, Shropshire Autism Hub - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Department for Education approves Shropshire Council SEND Reform Plan - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Cabinet endorses major adult social care transformation programme - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Cabinet to consider bringing litter and street cleaning services back in-house - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Council begins process of preparing new Local Plan - Shropshire Council Newsroom

Councillor Activities

Remembrance Sunday was a big focus for both of us this month, with Gary having a ceremonial role in activities in Shrewsbury as Armed Forces Champion and Deputy Chair. I took part in the parade and wreath laying in Wem, before attending the church

service and meet and greet at the United Services Club. I have to say I found it a very emotional experience with several hundred people lining the streets for the parade. Hearing the names of the fallen soldiers called with so many familiar surnames from the area, just highlighted the scale of the loss and the proximity of the conflict still. The Serman about Saint Maximimilian Kolbe was very poignant – there is a film of the story Triumph of the Heart (2025) for anyone wishing to follow that up.

In addition both of us attended the Economy and Environment committee which received a report following a four year funding award for a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Lynn Parker leads that service and is available to help and advise on any activities to restore nature – be it pond installation, rewilding field edges, or planting wildflowers on verges. These can be in private spaces, agricultural land or public spaces so get in touch if you have any space in mind. We also had an hour debate on the learnings from the Hills Ford Stages Rally held in September across the county; making recommendations should it come back, which they are keen to do. Overall the Rally was well received with positive feedback and a perceived big economic boost to the areas which held it. Our recommendations were to avoid the Area of Outstanding Natural beauty (Shropshire Hills, Long Mynd and Stiper Stones) where it was incongruous with the popular visitor attraction where people seek tranquillity; to have better consultation and communication via a liaison committee and to seek to place stages in Wards where Parish Councils confirm there is positive enthusiasm. If you feel this is something which might be popular in the area in future years, and wanted to consult with residents, then we can help you to communicate with the organisers and provide you with reports from this year.

Gary also attended an extraordinary full council meeting to discuss the external auditors report into financial management. I had to give my apologies due to an important Vet course I was on. The report can be read here: Date The minutes are not yet published but should be available soon.

Lamp Post Moved – Mill Street

You may remember last year in my reports I had requested a lamp post was moved on Mill Street where it was narrowing the pavement such that a wheelchair would need to have its wheel right on the edge of the curb-stone to pass; which was isolating one particular elderly resident from the facilities of the town. This has now been moved which should make life easier and safer for wheelchair and pram users south of the river.

Road Closures

Please find enclosed details of a temporary road closure:

Road Closure: Ellesmere Road, Wem

Start Date: 16th November 2026

End Date: 16th November 2026

Purpose: Replace manhole frame

Works Promoter: Severn Trent Water

Works Promoter Ref: LB7012204-000014214747B-01

Enforcement pattern for Ellesmere Road, Wem:
All the time

You can view the closure and diversion route by clicking here: https://one.network/?tm=GB152810586