

## **County Councillor report Butlers Marston Parish Council Meeting 20th November 2024**

### **Specialist support for children with SEND**

More children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in Warwickshire are now receiving tailored support within mainstream schools. Find out more about specialist resourced provisions: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5600/warwickshire-county-council-expands-specialist-support-for-children-with-send->

### **Supported internships in Warwickshire**

Warwickshire County Council is working to develop pathways to employment for young people with SEND through supported internships.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5681/new-role-to-lead-the-development-of-supported-internships-in-warwickshire>

### **Support for male victims of domestic abuse**

Warwickshire County Council and its partners marked the third ever Male Victims Domestic Abuse Day by showcasing the range of support that is available for victims. One in Seven men experience domestic abuse from partners or relatives Discover more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5700/warwickshire-county-council-highlights-support-for-male-victims-of-domestic-abuse>

### **Highlighting the power of fostering**

Warwickshire Fostering is proud to announce the release of Everything, a heartfelt short film that shines a light on the life-changing impact of fostering.

Watch the video here: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5650/new-short-film-everything-launches-to-highlight-the-power-of-fostering->

### **Council commits to raising awareness of Pension Credit**

Warwickshire County Council is committed to ensuring the county's eligible residents are supported in claiming their Pension Credit entitlement this winter.

This follows unanimous support at a Warwickshire County Council Full Council meeting which saw Councillors united in their commitment to protecting the county's most vulnerable pensioners from fuel poverty.

Pension Credit tops up pension income and can help with day-to-day living costs. People who claim Pension Credit may also be able to get the Winter Fuel Payment and help with heating costs, as well as access to other financial support. It is estimated around 5,800 pensioners living in the county may be entitled to Pension Credit but are not currently claiming it.

The Council is also asking residents to check in with friends and family who may be entitled to Pension Credit and to support them with checking eligibility and making their application.

Check eligibility at <https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit> or by calling the Pension Credit claim line on 0800 99 1234

To help residents stay safe and well during the winter months, Warwickshire County Council and partners will be signposting to a variety of support and guidance.

For more information about a wide range of support and information this winter visit [Cost of Living – Cost of Living \(costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk\)](#)

### **Warm and well this winter**

As we step into the winter season, the excitement of festive activities can sometimes be overshadowed by challenges, especially for those facing health risks or financial pressures. Discover more about staying warm and well: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5701/supporting-warwickshire-to-stay-warm-and-well-this-winter>

### **Kind Communities - Kind Food Grant fund**

If you are involved in community-orientated food projects across Warwickshire, you are invited to apply to the second round of Warwickshire County Council's Kind Communities-Kind Food Grant fund. Apply now: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5727/community-food-groups-and-projects-invited-to-apply-to-latest-kind-communities-kind-food-grant-fund>

### **I need support now**

Paying for my food, energy and water

If you are a Warwickshire resident with no other access to funds to pay for food or energy bills, you may be eligible for support through the Local Welfare Scheme. For more information, visit the [Local Welfare Scheme pages](#) or call 0800 4081448 or 01926 359182. Phone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 5pm and Friday from 9am to 4.30pm.

### **Getting money advice**

If you have concerns about debt, managing your money, what benefits you are entitled to, housing or employment, the [Citizens Advice website](#) contains an array of advice, support and services to help. You can also reach out to your local Citizens Advice in [Northern Warwickshire](#), [Bedworth, Rugby and Nuneaton](#) or [South Warwickshire](#), depending on where you live. You can call the county freephone advice line on 0808 250 5715 - Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm.

### **WPDG win newcomer of the year title**

Warwickshire Property & Development Group, set up by Warwickshire County Council has landed major recognition for its contribution to unlocking investment in the county - just three years after it launched. Since its launch WPDG has grown into a multi-million pound development business. The group's most significant commercial achievement is a scheme in Southam called Sucham Park. Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5720/wpdg-win-newcomer-of-the-year-title>

### **Police antisocial behaviour patrols**

Warwickshire Police is conducting targeted patrols in hotspots to tackle antisocial behaviour. The Focusing on those locations aims to prevent crime in the specific areas and reduce overall crime levels in the wider area. Discover more about Op Resolve:

<https://www.warwickshire.police.uk/police-forces/warwickshire-police/areas/warwickshire-police/campaigns/campaigns/2024/op-resolve/>

### **Council improving access to safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse**

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Cabinet members have approved the Warwickshire Safe Accommodation Strategy for 2025 -2028, which provides improved support for victim-survivors of domestic abuse in Warwickshire. WCC is committed to supporting victim-survivors of domestic abuse to access appropriate, safe accommodation that meets their needs. One of the biggest challenges faced by victims of domestic abuse is the immediate need for safe accommodation. Safe Accommodation can provide a lifeline for individuals and their children, escaping domestic abuse, offering a secure and supportive environment where they can begin to rebuild their lives. Following a call out for real stories in April 2024 to contribute to the new Warwickshire Safe Accommodation Strategy, over 60 victim-survivors and professionals shared their views. For help and support please go to [www.talk2someone.org.uk](http://www.talk2someone.org.uk)

Find out more in this short video: <https://youtube.com/shorts/y5xND-4ZHyg>

### **Water Beads**

#### **The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) has issued a Safety Alert**

Urgent warning: Keep water beads away from under 5's

An [alert](#) has been issued warning parents and childcare settings to keep water beads away from children under 5 years old. The warning comes following action by the Office of Product Safety and Standards to remove unsafe water beads from the market. With their bright colours and squishy feel, water beads are especially appealing to young children. When dry, water beads are tiny and can easily be swallowed without detection. As they bathe in stomach fluids, some can expand to 400 times their original size, posing a serious risk of blockage in a child's bowel. Some water beads grow to the size of golf balls.

#### **Product Safety Alert: Water Beads (PSA7)**

This is a Product Safety Alert from the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) for a product commonly known as water beads. Water beads can pose a serious risk of a) gastrointestinal blockage requiring surgery or b) asphyxiation (suffocation or choking). This Alert is for consumers (particularly parents and caregivers to young children), childcare and educational establishments, local authority trading standards and businesses to warn of the potential harm that water beads can pose. To learn more, go to [Office for Product Safety and Standards](#).

#### **Warwickshire's Lord Lieutenant presents national honours**

The extraordinary achievements of several residents in Warwickshire have been recognised in formal presentations and events by the Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire, Tim Cox. Mrs Janet Nelson of Butlers Marston was presented with the BEM. for services to education

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/5735/warwickshire-s-lord-lieutenant-presents-national-honours-and-visits-inspiring-local-charity-for-young-people>



Chris Mills  
County Councillor  
Butlers Marston

## **Butlers Marston Parish Council**

**November 2024**

### **District Councillor Report**

#### **Rural Local Authorities Unite to Demand Fair Funding in Upcoming Local Government Finance Settlement**

Fifty-six local authorities across England, including Stratford-on-Avon District Council, have united with the Rural Services Network (RSN) to address the unique financial challenges they face and to advocate for equitable funding in the forthcoming Local Government Finance Settlement.

In a joint letter to the Rt Hon Jim McMahon MP, rural councils have come together to emphasise the need for fair resource allocation to sustain essential services in sparsely populated regions and unlock growth and prosperity in rural communities.

Historically, the Local Government Finance Settlement has resulted in funding disparities, with urban councils receiving 36% more per head in Government Funded Spending Power than their rural counterparts. This funding gap has compelled rural councils to increase council tax rates, leading to an average rate in rural areas that is 20% higher per head than in urban areas. These higher costs, combined with lower-than-average rural wages, create financial strains that limit the potential for growth and economic development in rural areas.

With a one-year rollover settlement anticipated before a comprehensive financial review in 2025, the RSN and participating local authorities are urging the Government to recognise the increased costs involved in delivering services across broad geographic areas. The letter highlights how the aging population in rural regions intensifies service demands, stressing already limited resources.

## Cabinet approves new Armed Forces Covenant Pledge

Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Cabinet has today, Monday 4 November, approved the District Council's Armed Forces Covenant Pledge.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a commitment to those who serve or have served in the British military, and to their families. By signing, the District Council commits to treating those who serve, or have served in the armed forces, and their families with fairness and respect.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a pledge that organisations can make to demonstrate their support for the Armed Forces community. By signing the Covenant, the District Council has committed to:

- Promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation to demonstrate our support for the regular armed forces, veterans and reservists but also their families and bereaved families.
- Recognising, supporting and attending remembrance events including Armed Forces Day.

The District Council will sign the Covenant along with Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council, Warwick District Council and three businesses from Warwickshire (each partner signing their own pledge).

The District Council's Pledge covers the following areas:

- Organisational Support
- Housing and Housing Allowances
- Employment Support

The District Council has also been awarded the Bronze Award from the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) and is working towards Silver Award. The ERS encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same.

As well as supporting armed forces, signing the Armed Forces Covenant and promoting being armed forces-friendly, it also means the District Council is open to employing reservists, armed forces veterans (including the wounded, injured and sick), cadet instructors and military spouses/partners.

The Armed Forces Community includes:

- Regular personnel - Individuals currently serving as members of the Naval Service (including Royal Navy and Royal Marines), Army or Royal Air Force
- Reservists - Volunteer Reservists, who form the Royal Navy Reserve, Royal Marine Reserve, Territorial Army and the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, and Regular Reservists who comprise the Royal Fleet Reserve, Army Reserve and Royal Air Force Reserve
- Veterans - Those who have served for at least a day in the HM Armed Forces, whether as a Regular or a Reservist

- Families of Regular Personnel, Reservists and Veterans - The immediate family of those within the above categories
- Bereaved - The immediate family of Service Personnel and Veterans who have died whether or not that death has any connection with the service.

## Cyber Crime Awareness Month

Stratford-on-Avon District Council is taking the opportunity to remind residents about Cyber safety during Cyber Crime Awareness month. Cyber Scams are on the rise and with more people using devices connected to the internet this will only continue. Several million cases of fraud and of computer misuse are reported to the police every year with many more never reported. Many of those crimes could have been prevented by making a few small changes in online behaviour.

To avoid becoming a victim of online crime you don't need to be a computer expert. Developing a few good online habits drastically reduces your chances of becoming a victim of cyber crime, makes you less vulnerable and lets you use the web safely.

Visit [Cyber Aware](#) for step-by-step instructions on keeping your devices up-to-date with the latest security updates, and for more online security advice.

How to reduce your chances of becoming a victim:

- Try using three unrelated words, such as 'autumnalcookieportugal'; and think of three different words for each account, so if one is compromised the others are safe.
- Never give personal or sensitive details out online or over email.
- Make sure all devices have up-to-date anti-virus software and a firewall installed.
- Keep software and apps regularly updated.
- Only download from legal, trusted websites.
- Only open emails and attachments from known and trusted sources.
- Only ever use websites that start with https://, however make sure that you're on the correct site by sense-checking the full website address.
- Regularly back up your data.
- Control your social media accounts - regularly check your privacy settings and how your data is being used and shared.
- Be cautious of internet chats and online dating - there's no guarantee you're speaking to who you think.
- Be extremely cautious if you are asked for money.

If you or someone you know has been a victim of cyber crime you can report this a number of ways. If you are currently being subjected to a live and ongoing cyber-attack then please contact Warwickshire Police on 101.

If you suspect you've been scammed, defrauded or experienced cyber crime, the [Action Fraud](#) team can also provide the help, support and advice you need.

Call Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 (textphone 0300 123 2050).

Support

- Information about keeping safe online and protecting yourself from cybercrime and fraud. [Access the Get Safe Online website](#)
- [Victim Support](#) offers support for victims of any crime, including Cyber Crime.
- [You&Co](#) is Victim Support's youth programme where young people can seek help and advice on all crime related issues.
- [The Revenge Porn Helpline](#) gives advice for revenge porn victims. It is also important to report Revenge Porn to the Police.
- [The National Stalking Helpline](#) offers advice and support for stalking victims

## E-cargo bikes reach Upper Lighthorne

Stratford-on-Avon District Council's E-Cargo Bike will soon be seen in Upper Lighthorne, just in time for Community Transport Week!

Trustgreen Community Champion, Emma Hills, has acquired a E-Cargo bike from the District Council, to trail for free to help her get around the village.

The role of Community Champion is part of the work the District Council is enabling to ensure that newly established settlements, receive the right support to form residents' associations and become vibrant and socially inclusive places.

Emma says that, as Upper Lighthorne grows: "There are more opportunities for community activities across the whole site. When I first started in my role, it was a short distance to walk from the school to the village hall but now, I can travel many miles a day between the bowls club, allotments, school, and village hall and so have more recently been using the car to save time.

"The e-bike is a great alternative to that. It will not only save me the travelling time but more importantly stops me from using the car on all my short journeys. With many of the community activities focusing on healthy living and restoring nature it seems like the obviously choice. I also hope by using the e-bike as a sustainable form of transport it sets a good example to the community, so we all can start thinking about alternative ways to travel around now and in the future."

Richard Thomas, Group ESG and Trustgreen Director, said: "I was thrilled to hear that Emma would be receiving this amazing e-bike and would like to thank all involved. Sustainable transport is one piece of the puzzle in the fight against the climate change emergency and it will be wonderful to have our community champion setting the standard locally."

The scheme has been set up in collaboration with the Energy Saving Trust and local company, Pashley Cycles who are providing the e-Cargo bikes.

If you are a registered business and would like to acquire a more sustainable way of travelling around the District, [please visit the District Council's website](#) to find out more about e-cargo bikes, or email: [ecargobikes@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:ecargobikes@stratford-dc.gov.uk) for any enquiries or more information.



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### Contact details

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## Rural Crime Action Week 2024

This week (21<sup>st</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> of October) is National Rural Crime Action Week and Stratford-on-Avon District Council is taking this opportunity to raise awareness of the work being done to tackle rural crime and the support available in South Warwickshire.

The District Council's Rural Crime Advisors are proactive in providing advice and preventive services for those living in rural communities. Their aim is to engage with rural communities and provide bespoke advice and solutions to victims of crime.

Within South Warwickshire the two Rural Crime Advisors (RCAs) in the District Council's Community Safety Team, carry out dedicated work with individuals, businesses and communities to reduce the impact of crime in rural areas.

The posts are jointly funded by the District Council and the Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner. The Rural Crime Advisors work alongside the Warwickshire Police Rural Crime Team, local policing teams and other partner agencies, including the Community Safety Partnership.

If you have a farm or rural business and have been a victim of crime or are concerned that you may become a victim of crime, the RCAs can visit your property and discuss any improvements that might be made to help enhance your security.

If you feel that your community could benefit from wider crime prevention, the Rural Crime Advisors can run a 'Community Crime Prevention Toolbox' event in your village. The toolboxes contain a variety of crime prevention equipment such as: window alarms, shed alarms, can hides, personal alarms, property marking kits, switch timers, faraday pouches, TV simulators, along with plenty of crime prevention information leaflets and Warwickshire Connected z cards / Safe in Warwickshire cards. Attendees are encouraged to chat with the RCAs whilst there, then the box is left with a local custodian who can champion and share the equipment according to the needs of the villagers, such as loaning particular items, running their own property marking event. If you are interested in being a custodian of a crime prevention box in your community, please fill out the online enquiry form below.

In addition to the above, one of the RCA's current projects aims to reduce the impact of vehicle crime on local trades people by identifying villages to target and providing free crime prevention equipment and advice on the doorstep.

Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Rural Crime Advisors have been recognised by Warwickshire Police for their ongoing contribution to reducing rural crime and in February this year were presented with a Neighbourhood Policing Award.

For more information about the work being done or for support and advice on rural crime prevention, [please visit the Rural Crime page here](#).



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