

## Report for Clifton upon Teme Parish Council meeting – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021

Dear all,

I include a short report for the meeting.

### **District wide information:**

**Afghanistan Resettlement Scheme:** There are 2 schemes relating to Afghan resettlement to the UK:

1. The Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) for Locally Employed Staff (LES) in Afghanistan. This scheme is designed to support those Afghan nationals who have worked with our forces e.g. interpreters. This scheme was launched in April 2021.
2. The Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). This was the scheme that was announced last week, and which is designed to welcome 5,000 vulnerable Afghans into the UK in the first year of the scheme and 20,000 over the longer term. Further guidance on this scheme is still awaited.

Locally, the current Afghan resettlement scheme is being co-ordinated by Worcestershire County Council, and this will be the same for ACRS. The County Council will work closely with the West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership who are delivering this programme for the West Midlands on behalf of the Government. The County Council will consider wider support arrangements for Afghan arrivals, co-ordinate financial support from Government and donations from communities. We are also working with groups Citizens Advice and Malvern Welcomes.

As non-housing stock councils we are working with our housing association partners and private landlords to identify accommodation. Commitment has been sought from both Platform and Rooftop to begin to identify suitable family sized accommodation within our districts that could be appropriate, and both have responded positively to these requests. In addition, we will be working with voluntary groups in due course to help them with their work supporting new arrivals and getting access to funding

**Plans are being drawn up to help get the district's town centres fit for the future:** Malvern Hills District Council is producing five town centre transformation plans for Barnards Green, Great Malvern, Malvern Link, Tenbury Wells and Upton upon Severn.

The documents will set out a vision for the future of each retail centre, identifying the different challenges facing each one and the opportunities available. They will then be used to attract inward investment from both the public and commercial sector, as well as guide planning decisions.

Working with consultants Geoff Hughes Ltd with Paul Sampson Associates, a consultation will be launched in September with businesses, land and property owners, Worcestershire County Council, town and parish councils, community groups and the public to gain views on how they see the future of the high street.

The results of the consultation will be published in January, and it is planned the prospectuses will be signed off by spring 2022.

The prospectuses are part of the council's Five Year Plan commitment to help revitalise the town centres as they come under attack from the rise of online competitors, out of town retail parks and changing consumer habits.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the high street, accelerated the move towards online shopping and resulting in the collapse of several big chain stores.

While the strong independent shopping scene in the district's retail centres means they are well placed to weather the current storm, the towns will still need to adapt to survive.

To be the first to take part in the consultation, sign up to the dedicated consultation e-newsletter at [www.malvern hills.gov.uk/emailalerts](http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/emailalerts).

**Spacehive funding:** Malvern Hills District Council has announced new funding to support innovative community projects that aim to enhance the lives of people across the district. The new £150,000 People Make Places Fund is being launched in partnership with crowdfunding platform Spacehive and is part of the overall £500k Connected Communities Fund package to support the implementation of a new Connected Communities Strategy.

The fund will run for three years, over six rounds and the maximum amount pledged to a project by the council will be £20,000 or 50% of the total project costs. Residents, organisations, businesses, and charities can also donate as little as £2 to support the projects as well.

The People Make Places Fund is available alongside the Ticket to Ride Fund and Ward Member Budget. Malvern Hills District Council will provide the funding to organisations with project ideas that will help benefit the district and bring the community together. The fund is underpinned by the principles of equality and inclusivity and so project creators must demonstrate how they have ensured the project is accessible.

The projects should aim to:

- Improve the mental and physical health and wellbeing of your local community.
- Enhance lives through events and activities.
- Support young people's ideas and ambitions.
- Help to tackle the barriers and challenges many of us experience in life, such as poverty, ill health, distance from services, social isolation/loneliness.
- Cultivate food equity - projects that support building a fair food system for everyone.
- Protect and enhance our natural and built environment.
- Invest in and maintain the facilities we rely on for these activities to take place.

**The deadline for projects to be submitted to Spacehive is 22 September 2021.**

Visit [www.spacehive.com/movement/worcs](http://www.spacehive.com/movement/worcs) for more information.

Thank you.

*Caroline*

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