

PUBLIC QUESTIONS
COUNCIL MAY 9 2024

Question from Adam Fejfer

As a Monkmoor resident I reported over 5 months ago a number of potholes that needed repair on Fix My Street. Since receiving acknowledgements for my complaints I cannot see any update. As far as I am aware there has been no assessment of the problem nor any report or when the potholes will be fixed. And I am not the only resident who has made a complaint - other residents tell me that they have complained about potholes without any response.

When will the potholes in Monkmoor be repaired, particularly those on Crowmere Road?

Response from Councillor Dan Morris, Portfolio Holder for Highways

The Highways Service like all other council departments has to operate with the available budgets. The very wet and prolonged winter period has stretched resources and has impacted on our productivity, so the rate and speed of repair since the start of 2024 has reduced. Although this is a frustration for the service, it is a reality and is replicated right across the country. It should be noted that in 2023 the highways service increased the number of pothole repairs carried out by 46% on the previous year. This was done at no additional cost, due to service efficiencies and our new "mixed economy" operating model.

We are working hard to reduce the backlog of repairs as quickly as possible.

Question from Teri Trickett

The SAMDev Adopted Plan recognises that:

‘The development of the [Bayston Hill] village is constrained by the presence of the A49 running through the village and the major quarry to the east.’

On 18th November 2021, there was the following quote from a Cabinet Member in the Ludlow Advertiser: 'Councillor Dean Carroll said there was a desperate need to cut the number of accidents on the A49 between Shrewsbury and the Herefordshire border south of Ludlow, which has been branded "one of the most dangerous roads in England."

Over 100 Bayston Hill residents objected to, and Shropshire Council itself refused, a planning application for green belt/agricultural land to the West of Lyth Hill Road in 2017 (17/02561/Outline Planning Application), on several grounds, including that such development: ‘...would also result in the loss of higher quality agricultural land, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework’

A further Planning Application (22/05284/FUL) was withdrawn, following large numbers of objections.

Residents from The Hunttons have expressed serious concerns regarding flooding. Their report can be found on the planning portal, under comments, in the most recent application.

Can Shropshire Council please explain why the same land (BAY039- Emerging Shropshire Local Plan) has now been identified for 100 dwellings?

I believe that Bayston Hill villagers deserve a full explanation as to how circumstances have changed so considerably that this could now be conceived to be a sustainable development, contrary to previous planning decisions and the wishes of so many local residents and Bayston Hill Parish Council.

Response from Councillor Chris Schofield, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services

One of the key objectives of the Local Plan Review, currently at Examination, is to identify sufficient sustainable land to accommodate Shropshire's housing requirement to 2038. When adopted this would replace the majority of the current development plan for the area, which includes the SAMDev Plan.

The 2017 application referred to in the question, on the Lyth Hill Road site in Bayston Hill, was refused on the grounds it was in an area designated as countryside against the SAMDev Plan, and therefore there is a presumption against development. However, contrary to the implication in the question, the site is not located in the Green Belt.

In the emerging Local Plan it is proposed this site is allocated for residential development and thus to be incorporated into the Development Boundary of Bayston Hill. Doing this would remove the site from its current 'countryside' location in policy grounds. The proposal to do this has been subject to significant site assessment and public consultation. The Council is aware of the current planning application on the Lyth Hill Road site and will be determining this application in due course with reference to both the current Development Plan for the area, which includes the SAMDev Plan, as well as any other material considerations.

Question from Victoria Moore

The respected Environmental Science Journal of The Royal Society of Chemistry, confirmed in January 2023 that 80% of England's drains at or beyond capacity, with consequent leaks, flooding and pollution of our streams and rivers: *Reference* - DOI: 10.1039/d2ew00637e

The 2020 Shropshire Water Cycle Report confirmed that Shrewsbury and Shropshire's drains are beyond capacity, needing urgent repair/updating/replacement

Since they were constructed, the Sweetlake Meadow and Oteley Road developments have had recurrent issues, with blocked and leaking drains,

demonstrated recently by human excrement flowing onto residents' porches, gardens and out of sinks and toilets, which is both repulsive and a public health hazard.

Worse still, Shropshire Council, builders SJ Roberts, Taylor-Wimpey and McPhillips, Severn Trent Water and The Environment Agency have been playing Pass the Poo Parcel, with no-one accepting responsibility for dealing with the issues and blaming residents for putting non-degradable items into sinks and toilets. I'm reminded of the Fujitsu/Horizon/Post Office attempts to avoid responsibility for their failures by blaming users.

Will Shropshire Council now take responsibility and show leadership by commissioning a further urgent report of Shrewsbury's water supply, drains systems and watercourses along with its partners, including Severn Trent Water, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Shrewsbury Fisheries, The Environment Agency and Shropshire's Director of Public Health, to establish the causes and extent of the current issues and the required remedies, with a commitment to urgently implement recommendations?

After all, Shropshire Council granted Planning Consent for all these developments, in full knowledge of the lack of capacity of existing drains.

<https://plus.shropshirestar.com/news/environment/2024/04/28/residents-blamed-for-blocking-drains-as-human-waste-spills-into-streets-of-shrewsbury-development/>

Response from Councillor Chris Schofield, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regulatory Services

Shropshire Council would not normally get involved in matters relating to the adoption of foul sewers on new development. It would be up to the developer to construct these to an adoptable standard in line with the approved drainage layout which would then be inspected and adopted by STW.

You refer to a specific development by Taylor Wimpey. We are aware that STW are working with Taylor Wimpey to ensure these issues are resolved as soon as possible. Clearly it's in Taylor Wimpey's interest to get this resolved otherwise the sewers won't be adopted.

That being said, Shropshire Council's Flood Risk and Drainage Manager will continue to raise the residents concerns with STW.

With regard to the planning application process, STW are consulted on these developments and are the technical experts on drainage matters. Their comments are fully taken into account when determining the applications.

Question from Spencer Edwards

It is a statutory duty to provide household recycling centres. The legislation does not specify how many need to be provided leaving it up to the authority to decide, but does it mention accessibility? How can I access the ones in Shropshire, taking Shrewsbury as an example, if I do not have a car? I have been informed by Shropshire Council that it is not possible to walk or cycle into these facilities. Since around 18% of Shropshire households and many more individuals do not have a car or a van, what can be done to rectify this so that all council taxpayers can use a service they already pay for?

Response from Councillor Ian Nellins, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

In practice, 99.99% of customers come to the HRC sites in a car/van as they are carrying an amount of material that warrants such mode of transport.

If someone appears on a bicycle or on foot, the site operatives will engage with them and usually allow them to tip their waste materials.

However, at busy times whilst there are queues, some users are tempted to exit their vehicles and start to offload by walking their waste into the site, rather than wait their turn to access the site. This can quickly lead to chaos from parked cars still in the queue and raised tempers with other users who are correctly waiting in the queue.

For this reason, we do not advertise access to pedestrians as we do not want to give the queue jumpers any encouragement or reason to try to justify their actions.

The proposed introduction of a booking system will remove this issue as there will not be queues as any user would need to book a slot, this would allow access for all users whether arriving in a car/van or a bike or on foot.

Additionally, people could share a ride to the HRC with a neighbour or friend, we also provide a bulky household waste collection service at a reasonable charge for those residents unable to take items to the HRC for whatever reason. Details of the bulky waste item collection service can be found on our website, along with information on alternatives to disposal, such as donating to the re-use schemes, or offering items via Freecycle and similar schemes.