

OCTOBER 2020

A new walking and cycling bridge has been installed over Hams Way as work on the Worcester Southern Link Road continues. Work is still ongoing either side of the bridge and it will open soon, replacing the pedestrian crossing at the busy junction near Powick Roundabout.

Other further major milestones in the scheme will follow soon; later this month the major lift of beams for the new river crossing at Carrington Bridge will occur, and in November another new walking and cycling bridge will be installed over Broomhall Way.



Work has started on the refurbishment of Sabrina Bridge in Worcester city centre, although the bridge is currently still fully open. It will close on 12th October for approximately 7 weeks, and the project will be completed in December.



Work is ongoing on other major projects: the congestion scheme at A38 Bromsgrove, the A44 Pinvin junction upgrade, Churchfields Urban extension in Kidderminster and the congestion improvement and public realm works at St John's, Worcester.

Applications for school places in 2021 opened on 1st September. This date and the process for applications for next year has not been affected by Covid-19.

The application is open for any child due to start school for the first time or moving to Middle or High School in September 2021. For children applying for a place at High School, the deadline to apply is 31st October 2020. For Primary, First, Infant, Junior and Middle schools, parents will have until 15th January 2021.

There is a secure online system where parents can create an account and submit an application. This also includes guides on starting school or transitioning to a new school.

The school admissions system can be accessed at: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions



In May of this year ContinU Trust expressed their interest to terminate the current contract for the provision of Early Intervention Support Service covering Wyre Forest and Hagley before its contracted end date in March 2021. Worcestershire Children First (WCF) agreed to the transfer and have been managing a programme of work to ensure a smooth TUPE transfer of staff into the Company as of the 1st October 2020.

During this period of transition, WCF colleagues have been working in partnership with the Wyre Forest and Hagley Project (WHP), involving staff and management to ensure there is a seamless transfer of staff and services with no impact to our valued stakeholders.

WCF holds it's first Annual General Meeting this week (Thursday 1st October). It is a year since WCF launched to provide a new way of delivering children's services in the county.

The Council welcomes the news that Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust has been taken out of quality special measures. The trust which manages the Worcestershire Royal, Alexandra and Kidderminster hospitals in the county has been recognised for significant improvements in safety and the quality of patient care by NHS England and NHS Improvement.

Staff at the trust were also praised for providing safe and high-quality care for patients.



A phased reopening of library buildings across Worcestershire saw all 21 libraries back open for business from 14th September, including the mobile library.

While social distancing measures remain in place, services in library buildings are limited. Opening

hours across the county are returning to normal and library staff are on hand to answer queries and provide information. At all libraries customers can:

- browse shelves and borrow books using self-service kiosks and reserve and renew loans as normal
- return books
- pre-book public computers
- pre-book a desk in the library for study and/or wi-fi access

Libraries are supporting Worcestershire residents recover and adapt post COVID by delivering free webinars to support job seekers and business start-ups. Links to these and a wide range of online information, activities and events can be accessed via the following channels:

[the Digital Library Hub](#), [Worcestershire Libraries Facebook page \(opens in a new window\)](#), [YouTube Channel \(opens in a new window\)](#)

The County Council has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 40% in the last ten years across our estates and operations.

A new plan is currently being finalised to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, in line with the Government's national emissions reduction target. Pending Cabinet approval later this year, the new Net Zero Carbon Plan will include the use of technology to help reduce emissions.

Among the considerations at County Hall are: effective ultra-low emission fleet vehicles; transitioning to non-fossil-fuelled heating systems; investment to improve energy efficiency in Council property and street lights; further investment in renewable energy, and the ability of the Council to offset remaining GHG emissions.

The Net Zero Carbon plan will look to continue to the progress made in this area since our original Carbon Management Plan was launched in 2005. It was then updated in 2011, and again in 2016.

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A busy bus lane is to have traffic enforcement cameras, due to vehicles using this lane illegally. The popular Lowesmoor bus lane is to have the cameras installed as it has been described as a 'location of significant delay' to the cross-city bus route for Worcestershire Royal Hospital. Concerns have also been raised about the high congestion in the area.

There are two sections of the bus lane to be covered by traffic enforcement cameras:

- Lowesmoor to St Nicholas St bus gate enforceable 24 hours per day 7 days per week
- Sansome St to Lowesmoor bus lane enforceable 15:30 – 18:30hrs each day

The only vehicles that can use these bus lanes are buses and all emergency vehicles. For the first 2

weeks of operation, drivers will be issued with a warning letter rather than a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN). There will then be a 2-week period without PCN issues. Following this 4-week grace period, the bus lane enforcement scheme will begin issuing PCN's to all vehicles using the bus lane illegally.

More than 700 adults have been on virtual learning courses run by Worcestershire County Council since the start of lockdown. Adult Learning Worcestershire provides a plethora of online courses in areas including employability and work and art and creative Skills. Whether you are looking for an introduction to Chakras or advice for building your CV, Adult Worcestershire has an expert local tutor at hand.

Courses will return to the classroom but for now, to ensure the safety of learners, they are being delivered online.

There are nearly 200 online courses available and to find out more go to [the Courses section of the Council's website](#)

Find out more online:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk

