



Clerks Update–September (October meeting)

Throughout September, I have been working closely with Councillor Hodnett to prepare for the relaunch of the Community Drop-In, now formally managed by Highley Parish Council. The initiative welcomes service providers from across the county to support residents and is timed to coincide with monthly health visitor appointments at the medical practice—helping us reach young families and raise awareness of available services.

The Severn Centre was decorated with bunting and balloons for the relaunch, and we are running a free monthly raffle (sponsored by the Co-Op) through to Christmas for attendees. This month's Drop-In featured representatives from domestic abuse support services, the Job Centre, mental health support, smoking cessation, and blood pressure monitoring, among others.

In addition to this, I have continued to support residents with day-to-day issues during office opening hours. These have included assistance with PIP applications, land registry queries, hedgerow and tree concerns, planning matters, benefit advice, and signposting to both the police and Shropshire Council. I have also been actively pursuing Highways-related concerns, including clarification on the B4555 traffic lights (discussed in a meeting with Andy Keyland), blocked drains on Clee View awaiting clearance, and the replacement of missing or damaged street signage.

Considerable time has been dedicated to preparing for meetings, including:

- Severn Centre Advisory Board: Researching historical agreements and background information.
- Police Working Group: Meeting Sgt Bell and arranging suitable visit, requesting ANPR data, reviewing domestic violence statistics, and discussing road safety checks.
- Communication & Events Group: Planning for Santa's visit to the Centre, drafting raffle correspondence, sourcing ticket books, and liaising with potential suppliers.
- Village & Environmental (RoW) Group: Requesting LNRS mapping, purchasing a Pathfinder map, compiling data for the bus shelter survey, preparing seed envelopes for Cllr Bunn, inviting ecology experts, and reviewing budget allocations and asset records.
- Youth Working Group: Coordinating a visit to the youth club, exploring DBS checks for councillors, and supporting youth engagement to better understand local needs.

The hanging baskets have now been mostly taken down, with preparations underway for winter storage. I am inspecting and repairing them at home before returning them to storage. We have one contractor (albeit reluctantly) lined up to remove and reinstall the brackets over winter, and I will continue to pursue this.

Additionally, arrangements have been made for a structural engineer to assess the clock tower ahead of any proposed repair works.

Looking Ahead

My focus will now shift to the 2026–27 budget preparations, alongside internal audits, VAT returns, and other RFO responsibilities in advance of the upcoming Revenue and Resources Meeting.

I have also had the first call from our lighting contractors and Christmas is getting underway – but not before we get those poppies up (and down!)