

### **Harriett Baldwin MP West Worcestershire Constituency**

Our aim is to keep you fully updated on our work in your constituency and support you in any issues that may arise. Below are some of the main issues we are currently progressing in your constituency, followed by contact details for further information.

#### **Our work in your constituency**

##### **Flooding**

We are working with the County and District Councils in Worcestershire to improve their understanding of flooding issues and increase community resilience. The Strategic Flood Group includes local authority elected member representation and is seen as best practice nationally.

Our annual programme for river maintenance work to reduce flood risk is on our website <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/109548.aspx>

##### **Pershore flood alleviation scheme**

Construction work has commenced on this scheme to protect 61 properties from fluvial flooding in the Defford Road area of the town. To minimise disruption to residents and reduce the environmental impact of the works, material for the earth flood embankments is being transported by barges up the River Avon from a site in Birlingham. The added benefit of taking the material from Birlingham is that a wetland and wildlife area is being created there which will improve wildlife habitat for the future. Our aim is to complete the scheme by the end of the summer. As you are aware, in partnership with the Town Council, we are also planning a 'sod cutting' ceremony for Thursday 27 May at 2.30 pm, to mark the start of the work on the flood wall on the allotments. The Mayor of Pershore has kindly agreed to make the sod cutting.

##### **Kempsey flood alleviation scheme**

In January 2010, the Severn Trent Regional Flood Defence Committee allocated £914,000 to construct a flood alleviation scheme for the village of Kempsey. We are currently developing the detailed design work and we aim to submit a planning application for the scheme later this summer, with construction work starting early next year. At the National Flood Forum conference two of our members of staff were presented with the 'golden umbrella award' for going the extra mile. This was seen as a thank you for the support they provided local residents and the local flood action group (FLAG) in securing a scheme for the village, and putting their needs at the heart of our work.

### **Upton upon Severn Flood Alleviation scheme**

As you will be aware, we have been actively working with English Heritage and the local authorities on the final design for the new flood defences along the waterfront in Upton. A public exhibition of the final designs will take place on 17 June 2010, followed by a planning application in July 2010 for this part of the scheme.

In the meantime, planning has been submitted for the New Street flood defences and a decision is due imminently. If we gain planning approval within a reasonable timescale for New Street, we are aiming to start work later this year to minimise disruption to the festivals and businesses in the town in 2011.

### **Increase in flood risk preparedness**

We recently delivered a series of 'be prepared for flooding' lessons to schools in 'at risk' areas including Upton upon Severn. This was in partnership with The Duckworth Trust through the Eco Schools initiative.

### **Uckinghall flood alleviation scheme**

In January 2009 the Severn Trent Regional Flood Defence Committee allocated £750,000 to construct a flood alleviation scheme for Uckinghall. The village suffered severe flooding during the July 2007 floods, with water levels remaining high for three weeks. After the 2007 floods, the village formed their own action group, Uckinghall Flood Action Group (UFAG), which has greatly assisted us with its investigations. Our aim is start construction work on the scheme later this year and we are arranging a public open day to display and discuss our plans for the scheme over the coming weeks.

### **Tenbury Wells flooding/LAA red flag**

We are an active member of a senior level task group which was formed in January 2010 in response to the red flag for flood risk in Tenbury issued by the Audit Commission in Worcestershire's Compulsive Area Assessment. This group is led by Malvern Hills District Council. The group is exploring property-level flood protection and resilience measures in the short term and DEFRA are contributing £125,000 towards these measures for 30 homes in Tenbury. We are assisting with these initiatives.

We also recently supported public drop-in advice sessions at the Tenbury Pump Rooms on 8, 10 and 13 April 2010 which were attended by a number of partner organisations.

### **Powick flood alleviation scheme**

In January 2009, the Severn Trent Regional Flood Defence Committee allocated £654,000 to construct flood defences in the village to protect 16 properties. The scheme is also designed to provide better flood protection to the main A449, which is a major route through the Malvern Hills. We are aiming to apply for planning permission and consent for work this summer. Our aim is to start construction work as soon as possible, but we are governed by the times allowed for us to turn the power off on a main electricity power line through the village. Once we have planning permission, a detailed construction programme will be agreed with key stakeholders.

### **Cob House Fishery**

We invested £40,000 towards pathways and jetties for this fishery. This has provided a safe place for disabled and able bodied anglers to compete in match fishing or simply enjoy pleasure angling. It has opened up an area of the river environment which would otherwise not have been accessible. A visitor/education centre should also be completed on this site in September 2010. This will offer an "access for all" facility which further promotes angling and education.

### **Micro-hydropower schemes at Pershore Weir, Worcestershire**

We are currently considering the issue of competing schemes for hydropower on the same stretch of water in Worcestershire. We met with Wychavon District Council and the two competing developers recently to try and find a constructive way forward. Our position statement on hydropower is available on our website [http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Research/Hydropower\\_position\\_statement\\_FINAL\\_English.pdf](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Research/Hydropower_position_statement_FINAL_English.pdf)

### **For more information**

Your local Environment Agency area office is in Tewkesbury (referred to as West Area, Midlands Region). If you would like further information on any of the issues above or other issues you may have, please do not hesitate to contact Dafydd on:

Direct Dial:                   01684 864345  
Dedicated e-mail:       westmpcontact@environment-agency.gov.uk  
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