

January 23, 2012

Teme Bridge refurbishment on target

Two weeks in to the Teme Bridge refurbishment work the programme is on schedule. The contractor had originally intended to provide a temporary footbridge at the side of the bridge, but last minute engineering difficulties meant the work had to be reprogrammed so that mobility scooters, pedestrians, and cyclists could remain on the main bridge. This has not affected the overall programme.

The first week saw the excavation of the footways and the exposure of the numerous resident ducts which had to be carefully excavated around to avoid damage and potential loss of services to the town. Thanks to a diligent contractor no such loss of services were experienced.

Excavations have been made to permit repairs to two of the bridge arches where erosion has reduced the thickness of a small number of important masonry stones.

Clearly visible to passers-by is the preparation work being undertaken in the footways prior to the installation of the waterproofing system which will preserve the structural elements of the 1908 concrete widening for many years to come. The elevations of the bridge when viewed from the river are receiving attention too where defective concrete is being removed to permit permanent concrete repairs.

Pontoons are also visible and these are being used to gain access to the underside of the bridge to permit the installation of the steel beams, which is the strengthening part of the refurbishment. These pontoons also provide flexibility in terms of varying water levels in the river.

County Councillor for Tenbury Wells, Ken Pollock, said: "It is very encouraging to see the bridge repair work forging ahead but the level of trade in the town is worryingly low. The three-hour maximum stay imposed this week on twenty of the fifty-five temporary car parking spaces by the bridge has had an immediate effect with spaces now regularly appearing for visitors and shoppers. Burford Parish Hall car park with 30 or so spaces has also now been made available by the Parish Council for those wishing to park all day.

"I found yesterday that it only takes three minutes 25 seconds to walk from the bridge to the parish hall car park and I would like to encourage more people to use this option, if they want to park all day."

Richard Attwood, Engineering Project Manager for Worcestershire County Council, said: "I am delighted at the approach which is being taken by the contractor with our joint commitment to meet the time constraints given to the community for the road closure. As the job progresses we gain even more confidence that everything is on target. Engineering projects of this nature always provide us with challenges, but we are well placed with available resources to meet them"

Teme Bridge is programmed to re-open on the March 16, 2012.

For further details on the scheme, which includes a downloadable diversion route map and a host of other useful information, please visit the dedicated section on the Teme Bridge works at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/currenttransportschemes.

Information on the Grand Windfall loyalty scheme is available at www.tenburychamber.co.uk