

Paul Gadd County Councillor Update

Saffron Walden Town Council – Planning and Transport Committee 8/10/26

[Note, items in italics are repeats from last month, still unresolved]

1. Flooding and drainage issues:
 - a. I'm not aware of any issues.
2. Highways generally:
 - a. Linden Homes s.106: the process still grinds very slowly. Essex Highways have now realised that some of the land needed for the Audley End Road path is indeed owned by SWCHS! I have a call with Highways and SWCHS on 5/10/26; as SWCHS have always been strongly supportive, I hope that there won't be any material delay. As ever, I'll keep you informed;
 - b. Market Square pedestrianisation – SWTC are receiving the same information that I am currently. The latest update I had was from 15/9/26, as follows:

"I appreciate that this process has taken longer than expected, and I understand the Town Council's frustrations.

The report is now nearing finalisation, and colleagues will share it with Saffron Walden Town Council as soon as possible. Before then, it needs to go through internal governance steps, including a briefing for Councillor Mark Webster, Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure. We will also need to arrange a briefing with Councillor Gadd. These briefings are not intended to be decision-making stages, but an opportunity to keep members informed about the report and the proposed approach to engagement. Importantly, the report does not represent the end of the process or a predetermined decision. It provides the evidence and options needed to support the next stage. Our proposed approach is for ECC and UDC to work closely with the Town Council to shape a programme of engagement and consultation with residents, market traders and, most importantly, town-centre businesses.

We want the Town Council to be fully involved in agreeing how that engagement is framed and delivered, including the options presented and how practical matters such as servicing, accessibility and market operations are addressed. Sarah Lewin, UDC's Economic Development Manager, will also help to shape the consultation and ensure that the views and needs of local businesses are properly considered.

Getting the engagement right, and undertaking it in partnership with the Town Council, will be essential before any recommendation is made or the formal TRO process begins. Once the internal briefings have taken place and we have shared the report, I suggest that we meet promptly to agree the engagement approach and next steps."
 - c. High Street pavements – I've chased again. Highways have done some remedial work on the west side, but not the east side, which is getting steadily more dangerous.
 - d. I've forwarded you notification of:
 - i. *"the intended closure of Newport Road, Sparrowsend Hill, due to commence on 21st October 2026 for 3 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes surface dressing works."*

- ii. *“the intended closure of Little Walden Road, due to commence on 12th October 2026 for 36 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Cadent Gas undertakes gas main replacement works.”*
 - iii. *“details of the intended closure of Station Road, due to commence on 28th October 2026 for 3 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Affinity Water undertakes fire hydrant repair works.”*
- e. I’ve raised the Summerhill Road request with Essex Highways. As there is no LHP, and no other means of delivery, I’ve logged it with them, but can do nothing more, even regardless of Highway’s policy approach. I’ve warned the resident that Essex Highways are not particularly receptive to sustainable transport schemes, although in principle I would be supportive.
- 3. LHP matters:
 - a. The LHP system is still under review, with no indication of what will happen.
- 4. Buses:
 - a. ECC Passenger Transport are close to completing their review of the Saffron Walden to Audley End bus timetable, and should shortly be going out for consultation with a draft new timetable. I’ll let you know when I hear further.
- 5. ECC matters:
 - a. Nothing currently affecting Saffron Walden