

## **Severn Stoke and Croome d'Abitot Parish Council**

**Work begins on Severn Stoke flood scheme.** Construction has begun on the new flood defence scheme at Severn Stoke with construction being delivered by Alun Griffiths Construction Ltd. The scheme is expected to be complete by Christmas 2026. The Environment Agency is funding approximately £5 million of delivery costs, with Worcestershire County Council contributing a further £250,000.

The scheme will consist of a flood bank that runs to the west of village, new drainage works to manage surface water, and a section of raised road to where Ham Lane will pass over the flood bank. Some imported fill material for the flood bank is already on site and further material will be imported in the coming months. Vegetation clearance is planned to commence on 5 May 2026. A temporary access track will be provided for farmers. Works on Ham Lane and the associated temporary access arrangements will commence in May. Ham Lane itself is expected to be closed from **15 May 2026** and reopened **24 July 2026** (subject to no issues being encountered during construction activities).

Thank you to everyone that has contributed and worked hard to get the project to this point.

**An important reminder to dog owners.** Please remember to keep dogs on leads at all times on the permissive paths around the Knights Hill Ponds at Severn Stoke, as this area is home to vulnerable ground-nesting birds. Dogs should also be kept out of the water, in order to avoid interference with the local angling club who are paying tenants of the land and to prevent disturbance and protect wildlife. The permissive path around the pool is on private land and we are keen to avoid a situation where access is reconsidered by the owners.

The Parish Council has received reports of dog owners not clearing away after their dog has fouled and, in addition, would remind owners that dogs should not be allowed off the lead when passing through fields where crops are growing. Your cooperation helps ensure the parish remains safe and enjoyable for everyone and protects the businesses of our farmers.

Finally, we have seen reports from farmers of dogs chasing and killing local livestock. It is a serious criminal offence for a dog to be permitted (inadvertently or not) to chase, attack, or cause distress to livestock. Owners or anyone in charge of the dog can be prosecuted and the law in question (Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Act 2025) covers farmland, public rights of way, paths, and roads. Reports of loose dogs can be sent to the Parish Council, who will inform the Dog Warden at Regulatory Services. The Dog Warden investigates dogs that are permitted to roam and has powers to seize persistent strays.

**Planning appeals to follow new, streamlined process** The government has announced changes to the planning appeals process, aimed at making it faster and more focused on the evidence submitted during the original application. Under the new

approach, applicants will no longer be able to introduce new evidence at the appeals stage. Instead, appeals will be determined based solely on the information provided as part of the initial application. Previously, applicants could strengthen their case during an appeal by submitting additional evidence. The updated process removes this step, placing greater emphasis on submitting a complete and robust application from the outset. These changes will apply to all new planning applications submitted from 1 April 2026.

From a parish council point of view there will also be a requirement to make sure that agreed councillor responses to planning applications are as robust and informed as they can be. We would encourage residents to regularly look at the parish council website, which holds a list of the most recent planning applications and provide feedback, support or concerns or information to the parish council, so that it may be considered as part of the official parish council response.

**NEXT MEETING: Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2026, 7.30pm at the SOQ meeting room, Croome National Trust Visitor Centre.** Parish Clerk, Lisa Stevens, T: 07950256363,

E: [parishclerk@severnstokeandcroomedabitot-pc.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@severnstokeandcroomedabitot-pc.gov.uk)

Your councillors are Richard Hill (Chair), Simon Bott, Ian Daly, Laura McEwan-Hill, Pat Preston and Raymond Williams. We have 6 vacancies for immediate co-option.