

Sir Michael Spicer
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On Friday 2nd July I was delighted to attend the public meeting in the Memorial Hall to update residents on progress with the repair of the viaduct. This was a valuable opportunity to take stock of the current situation, explore a number of areas of concern and consider solutions to the problems faced by the town at the moment. It is encouraging to hear that the date has been set for the repairs to the viaduct to commence in August and that work on building the temporary diversion route to carry two way traffic has started. At the meeting it was helpful to be able to reinforce my view that the viaduct repairs represent the ideal opportunity to raise the A4104 and I will continue to press ministers to secure funding for this. Although the County Council have decided to go ahead with repairs to the viaduct, concern was expressed at the public meeting over the source of funding. I have urged the Secretary of State for Transport, Alistair Darling, to confirm that the government will allocate funds from unspent monies of last year. I await his response.

There is, of course, the wider question of traffic within Upton and although this is something I have raised before, the possibility of alleviating traffic in the town by means of a by-pass could be a long-term project. There would be without question financial and environmental issues to consider if such a project were to be seen as a serious possibility and these would need to be viewed alongside the best interests of traders and residents alike. In the meantime it is welcome news that Malvern Hills District Council and the Malvern Hills Highway Partnership are prepared to look again at the possibility of weight restrictions for heavy vehicles passing along Old Street. I have been pressing this on them for some time.

Despite the poor weather and viaduct problems, I was delighted that the Upton Jazz Festival was such a success once again this year and attracted a good attendance. It really is tremendous that Upton has become such a focus for those who love jazz music; the whole event is a welcome boost to the town at this challenging time.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have a local or national issue of concern. I can best be contacted by writing to me at the above address or by attending one of my monthly interview sessions at the Memorial Hall in Upton. Details can be found in the local press, by calling 01684 573469 or logging on to my website www.sirmichaelspicer.net

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