

## WHO WILL LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE OF BEWDLEY?

Last year Balfour Beatty commenced road works in Bewdley, which were suspended in the summer. The plan agreed with members of the Town Council was that work would start again in January 2009 commencing with High Street and Load Street; thus ensuring that the major disruption would take place when Bewdley was at its quietest. At a Public meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009 plans were produced showing the **major works in Bewdley were scheduled for the period covering Easter and the summer.** This was the first the Town Council and people of Bewdley had heard of the change of plan. The meeting was unanimous in requesting this be looked at again which was agreed. On 29<sup>th</sup> January the Town Council was informed the works would go ahead as presented on 13<sup>th</sup> January.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February 40+ members of the public attended the Town Council meeting: the following points were made.

- Why are the works going ahead for Load Street and High Street in the busiest time of the tourist season?
- We were lead to believe, in our discussions in 2008, that when the road works re-started in 2009, Load Street & High Street would be done in Jan and Feb. Why has that understanding not been kept to - and why have we been given no explanation for this?
- Why has the suggestion that the roads works for Load Street and High Street be deferred until Jan/Feb 2010 not been accepted?
- Traders in the Town are already suffering in the recession and road works in the summer will only add to their woes.
- Traders spoke gloomily of the town losing more shops in the coming months and the prospect of a poor summer resulting from road works will make things much worse.
- Residents in High Street were concerned at the arrangements that would apply to them.
- Residents were not convinced that every option had been thought through regarding the provision of 2-way traffic on Severn Side South.
- Surely Balfour Beatty has an obligation in light of its stated Corporate Responsibility to listen to and take on board the views of residents.

At the Town Council Meeting itself, the following motion was carried unanimously:

**“Following many months of Negotiations/Consultations on the timings of these works in High Street and Load Street, Bewdley, the scheme which was presented at the Public meeting on Tuesday 13/1/09 made it apparent that the proposed schedule of works will severely damage trade and tourism in the Town during the busiest time of the year.**

**Furthermore the proposed diversion of traffic from Severn Side South, Lax Lane and Gardeners Meadow via Stour port is unacceptable.**

**This Council calls upon the Officers of the respective agencies to halt current plans and to present a realistic practical solution for the residents and businesses of Bewdley, for consultation”**

**This motion was supported by all members of the public present**

**WHY WILL THE POWERS THAT BE NOT LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE OF BEWDLEY, WHO KNOW WHAT THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT?**

**THIS ACTION COULD KILL TRADE AND TOURISM, THUS BEING A NAIL IN BEWDLEY’S COFFIN.**

Support for the People of Bewdley and the Town Council is also being given by Dr Richard Taylor MP who is in contact with Balfour Beatty, Worcestershire County Council and Wyre Forest District Council.