

Closure of the Junction of The Bridge and Mendip Road for possibly 8 weeks due to the repair of the culvert.

The Bridges and Structures department at Somerset County Council have evaluated structural inspection reports from consultants (who have detailed issues affecting the structure). Unfortunately, the roof is made up of individual reinforced concrete beams and these have been found to be in poor condition and have failed in several locations.

You may be aware that Traffic management has been placed for safety reasons to help prevent vehicles, particularly HGVs, putting undue stress on the weakened culvert. The poor condition of the reinforced concrete beams will necessitate a scheme to replace the roof of the structure.

Included are two location plans below. In the second, you will see the proposed area to be repaired / replaced is hatched with red shading. The hatching does not include a works area or storage area for tools, materials & machinery, welfare facilities etc for the workforce. It merely highlights the location of the culvert to be repaired. The works area will require a larger site demarcation.

Whilst it is never our intention to cause disruption with such projects, by their very nature they can be intrusive and inconvenient.

The engineer has been in consultation with our contractor to formulate a method that will cause least disruption to the residents of Stoke St Michael. Unfortunately, due to the location, narrow road and the culvert being positioned longitudinally along the line of the carriageway, they cannot foresee a way of keeping the road open to traffic. They think the quickest and simplest way to repair the culvert would be to excavate the culvert and remove the roof from above, for the entire length indicated and replace it with a new structure. This is not an insignificant task, as the culvert runs for more than 30 metres from the headwall in the village and continues up the hill (Mendip Road). The works in this area will split the village in two for the duration of the project. It is envisaged to be a predicted duration of 6 to 8 weeks, although this could be weather dependant. They will endeavour to finish as soon as we are able.

Wherever possible we will work with our contractor to minimise disruption and facilitate individual needs wherever possible. It is their intention to provide a temporary footbridge to allow pedestrians to cross the structure for the duration of the works. Unfortunately, no vehicles will be allowed to cross.

These works will be carried out under an 'emergency' basis allowing us to proceed with a shorter planning and lead in time. That said, there are some issues regarding delivery times for some materials and specialist products.

The Parish Council have been asked to has been contacted to inform residents Stoke St Michael, to let Somerset County Council know if there are any critical dates to avoid in the coming months?

Residents who are immediately affected by the close proximity of the culvert will be written to. The engineer would like to reassure them that access to their properties will be maintained at all times, and the question will be asked if there are any special provisions that I should be made aware of.

For the reasons mentioned above, Somerset do not yet have a start date for this project, and the date is flexible at this point in time.

The design and procurement process are currently being progressed, and we are working with our contractor to finalise arrangements.

