

SILEBY PARISH COUNCIL - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

YEAR ENDING 30 APRIL 2022

It was again a great privilege to have been elected Chairman for the year and the role continues to be a challenging experience. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Councillor Liz Jones for her support as Vice Chairman.

My thanks also go to Councillor Richard Shepherd for his continued conscientious approach to village issues needing a County level approach.

I'd also like to thank our Borough Councillors Andy Paling and Paul Murphy for their consistent support in representing the interests of Sileby residents.

We welcomed three newly co-opted members to the council; Councillors Jon Frost, Neil Matlock and Tim Cox.

Sadly we had to announce the death of Janet Harris who had been a Sileby Parish Councillor since 1989. I'd also like to acknowledge the sad passing of Mavis Mason who served on Sileby Parish Council from 1987 to 1995.

We also said goodbye to Mick Pendery, our Cemetery Keeper for many years who retired at the end of March and welcomed Tony Southerden to the role. We wish Mick a very happy retirement.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our Councillors for their service. Parish Councillors give their time for no monetary benefit. They take on this role solely for the purpose of improving life for the residents of our village with the aim of making Sileby a great place to live and work. We do have vacancies and would invite anyone interested in getting more involved in village life to get in touch.

The past year has seen challenges but also some fantastic opportunities that will better the village for years to come.

Our relationship with our local police and community support officers remains extremely positive. Particular thanks go to Stu, Curtis and Jade for their responsive approach to tackling crime in our village. Councillors meet regularly with our police and community support officers to discuss local issues.

The key advice is still to report all crime and anti social behaviour, not only does this mean it gives police the opportunity to deal with issues, it also ensures the level of police support we secure is commensurate with the level of crime in the village. Reports can easily be made by phone or online.

All that said, whilst distressing to those who are victims of crime or affected in any way by anti social behaviour, crime remains extremely low in Sileby. It is recommended that residents sign up to Neighbourhood Link to get up to date information about crime and crime prevention related to Sileby.

Due to continuing rising Covid rates in Leicester and Leicestershire, along with a shortage of volunteers, we took the disappointing decision to not go ahead with the 2021 Christmas light switch-on event. However the Christmas lights still got switched on and looked amazing.

We also attended the Remembrance Sunday event which as usual was a dignified, thought provoking service.

Planning issues remain a concern for our village. The Parish Council are undertaking a review of the Neighbourhood Plan so that we can benefit from increased powers provided by Neighbourhood Plans.

It was disappointing to discover that Charnwood Borough Council had interpreted our reserve sites not to be identified housing allocation sites and therefore refused to take advantage of the increased powers a Neighbourhood Plan offers in resisting unwanted development.

The review will address this as we have established a housing need figure and allocated sites for development. Unfortunately we are doing this work whilst speculative applications for large housing developments with no regard for our community, infrastructure or environment are being put forward and likely to be granted permission by Charnwood Borough Council Planning Committee.

The Parish Council remain committed to representing Sileby residents' views and using the neighbourhood planning process to shape future development in our village. An open event was held earlier this month to both inform villagers of progress made and plans for the future.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Cllrs. Liz Astill and Liz Jones for their tireless work on the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee and the Planning Working Group in what is a frustrating and seemingly unfair environment.

Positive work already stemming from the Neighbourhood Plan consultation is Project Park! We have ambitious plans, dependent on securing funding over and above our allocated S106 monies, to renovate areas of the park and Pavilion to make it more accessible to all of our community.

We intend starting by relocating and updating the children's play area, improving the park's footpaths including providing a connecting route for a full perimeter walkway and making the Seagrave Road entrance safer for vehicles and providing accessible pedestrian access.

Details of the results of the Project Park! consultation along with information regarding our ambitions will be available on the Parish Council Website in the next few days.

We are also going to renovate the Seagrave Road Park gates. The brickwork is in need of some TLC and we are also going to have the gates and wrought ironwork repainted and the dedication to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth the Second re-gilded. We will do this in honour of her Platinum Jubilee.

It would be remiss not to mention the ongoing war in Ukraine and I'd like to thank the residents who donated first aid kits to our parish councillor, Sharif Haider, for transportation to the Ukrainian border as part of a convoy of five ambulances filled with medical supplies. The Parish Council will continue to identify ways to support the people of Ukraine.

In closing my Annual Report, I would like to thank, and show the Council's appreciation, to Rosemary, our Clerk, Julie our Deputy Clerk and Lauren, our Admin Assistant and all of the Council staff members for their unstinting dedication to providing an excellent service to the residents of Sileby. My personal thanks go to them for their support to me during my time as Chairman.

Thank you for attending this evening.

Julie Jones
Chairman, Sileby Parish Council
21/04/2022

