

SILEBY PARISH COUNCIL - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

YEAR ENDING 30 APRIL 2023

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. We recognise, and understand, the challenging budgetary constraints being experienced by the County Council this year. I'd particularly like to thank Councillor Shepherd for providing funding for the new speed sign on Cossington Road and the bollards on King Street both of which will contribute to increasing safety to both drivers and pedestrians in the village.

I'd also like to thank our Borough Councillors Andy Paling, Paul Murphy, Pauline Ranson and Hilary Fryer for their support in representing the interests of Sileby residents. As neither are standing in the forthcoming election, I'd like to wish them well with their future endeavours.

This year we welcomed three co-opted members to the council; Councillors James Walker, Ray Bailey and Ken McRae. We also had four resignations, Fiona Hughes, Dennis Geary, Jon Frost and Liz Astill.

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 positive. Crime, including antisocial behaviour, has remained low in the village since we've had a greater presence and a more hands-on approach for which we are grateful.

Parish Councillors attended the Remembrance Sunday event and we were pleased to support the event in returning to its pre-pandemic format. It was, as usual, a dignified and thought-provoking service.

The Parish Council were also extremely glad that we were able to return to a full Christmas Light Switch-on Event. The lights, as always, were stunning and the people who attended were able to have a fabulous and safe evening.

Planning issues remain a concern for our village. The Parish Council has worked, via the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee, to complete the required update to the Neighbourhood Plan so that we can benefit from increased powers provided by

Neighbourhood Plans. Thanks to that Committee we are in the best possible place to challenge inappropriate planning applications.

One huge blow to the village this year was the removal of the Kinchbus No.2 service to and from Leicester which also left the south of the village with no service at all. The Parish Council has led cross village discussions with Barrow Upon Soar and Cossington who are also affected and have involved our County and Borough Councillors along with our MPs. Unfortunately, to date, we are no further forward in getting a full bus service reinstated for the village but work continues. We will not cease to lobby for an adequate bus service to and from Leicester but in the meantime, we are exploring an alternative Demand Responsive Transport option.

On a more positive note, we have recently secured £500,000 of Shared Prosperity Funding to rejuvenate the Memorial Park. Project Park! Phase 1 will see play areas updated and improved, installation of a connecting route providing a full circular perimeter pathway and the redevelopment of the Seagrave Road entrance to make it safer for vehicles and providing an accessible pedestrian entrance.

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. At the same time a plaque will be installed to commemorate the coronation of King Charles the Third.

Whilst the Parish Council has its hands full with Project Park! it is keen to slowly start renovation and essential maintenance work at the cemetery. Work has already started to improve the biodiversity and particular thanks go to Councillors Higgs and Matlock for the work done so far. This work will continue along with the maintenance of unsafe headstones and future plans to rejuvenate the Garden of Remembrance remain in place.

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 everyone for attending this meeting, have a good evening.

Julie Jones
Chairman, Sileby Parish Council
20/04/23