

## WATERS UPTON PARISH COUNCIL

### Ward Member Report - 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Surprisingly, 12 months have quickly passed since my last report as your Ward Councillor. Therefore, once again, my thanks to everyone for their continued support, especially to the Parish Council.

My role, as your Ward Councillor, would be so much more difficult without their support and the knowledge each one brings to the table, which is so useful in many ways and aids to enable me to represent the local community. Collectively, we seek to have input into all matters and attempt to ensure your concerns and wishes are addressed, and any successes that have prevailed have happened with the support, and often patience - which is very much needed as I share your frustrations when trying to get responses and actions.

Whilst Covid has now been left behind us, consequences of it remain and linger on, especially financially.

This brings me on to the Council Tax rise this year, recognising that so many families not only in this Ward, but across the Borough are still recovering and struggling with their budgets and requiring assistance to offset the demands due to energy price increases, inflation, mortgage interest, rates - the list is endless. Therefore, at the TWC budget meeting, I, along with colleagues, opposed the increase.

Your Parish Council also recognised this and with excellent prudent budgeting once more, resolved not to increase the precept which I understand resulted in a reduction for all residents on the Parish Council element of the recent Council Tax bills.

So what, you may ask, has been achieved and what is currently outstanding as priorities?

Public transport - albeit not perfect, we do now have a service.

Speed of traffic - the installation of Speed Indicator devices, not only show the speed but record important data which will be used to substantiate our arguments to the police and highways authority as evidence that they need to take action.

Your Neighbourhood Plan has been effective - as a document written on behalf of residents taking your views into account and forming part of the TW Local Planning Policies, we need to ensure it remains current and relevant and I look forward to working with you all on the monitoring and review.

The Roundabout at Crudgington - a much needed improvement for safety reasons - is entering its final phase of construction. I have been in regular contact with the contractors and they have recognised the need for manual intervention at the traffic control lights to keep traffic flowing. WE realise that it can be frustrating, but the long term benefit will far outweigh the current concerns regarding delays.

The provision of the extended car park at Crudgington School.

There is more to be done following the recent storms and continued heavy rainfall. This has resulted in many areas of flooding which have highlighted how inefficient our drainage

infrastructure is and needs to be improved. However, flooding can be found across the Borough in areas that have not seen such levels of flooding previously and the Highways & Drainage teams are having to prioritise where the work will be of most benefit.

Potholes, of course, are always a concern and merely filling them with temporary tarmac is not, in my opinion, the answer – I continue to press for permanent repairs before more serious accidents are witnessed.

I would like to congratulate the Parish Council on the work it undertakes across the entire Parish. Your boundary covers a vast area and with so many rural roads and lanes, footpaths, verges and road drains – I do realise you have your work cut out. We also very much appreciate all the other projects you are involved with. You have play areas, bus shelters, benches, green spaces, rights of way, car parks etc. etc.

Finally, the Swan site remains the subject of much debate. It is good to hear that it now has new owners and we look forward to welcoming them to the village and working with them to bring the community asset to completion and to the properties being made available for purchase or rent. We will, of course, offer them as much support as is possible.

Once again, thank you to the Parish Councillors and thank you, as local residents, for your continued support and for keeping me informed on local issues – I remain committed to supporting you all.

**Stephen Bentley**

**Councillor for the Ercall Magna Ward**

**Telford & Wrekin Council**

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