Borough Councillors Report – JH 22.10.18

Upton is looking very autumnal and the colours remind us that we are lucky to live in a village with so many green spaces and beautiful trees. The downside is that there are areas where leaves and debris are not being swept up and are blocking or are in danger of blocking grids causing flooding during heavy rain.

The grids on Flag Lane South are a prime example of this. Residents have been complaining about flooding which has been lapping around their doorsteps. There had been some investigations by highways about the fall on the road but no one had thought to check the grids which when I looked I discovered where full to the top with leaves. If only when the Highways Officer had looked as I did, the problem could have been resolved much sooner.

There seems to be a lack of joined up thinking or a sense of urgency to attend to problems. I’m still waiting for the footpath between Demage Lane and Upton Lane to be cleared. I am also working with the Rights Of Way Officer and the Welfare Officer with Duke of Lancaster’s Regiment to clear the footpath that runs from Liverpool Road to Daleside. It is in need of care and attention and the bridge over the stream needs repairing. I will keep the Parish Council informed of the progress. I also hope the soldiers will strip and repaint the finger post at the start of the footpath.

More families are arriving at the Dale, becoming part of our community and the children and young people are settling into our local schools. I asked Captain Grimes, the Welfare Officer how our community might help. In Cyprus, the families were not integrated into the local community so I feel it will be great if we can make everyone feel at home. Captain Grimes has asked for support providing for Christmas. The Regiment has no decorations and no funding to provide selection boxes for the children. I have managed to obtain some financial help, but I wonder if members would agree to the Parish Council hosting a collection box at the Pavilion where residents could leave donations of new Christmas decorations?

You will notice from the email from Mark Brazil, that as promised we met to discuss the upkeep of Lodge Gardens, the Cockpit and the church grounds. The area most in need of attention is Lodge Gardens and as Mark has explained work will be carried out. We do have a plan to strip back all the current vegetation and to bring in a digger to clear the roots and expose the soil. Once we know what we have to work with we can plan what it will be best to plant. We can also determine the state of the sandstone wall and what repairs are necessary. Part of the plans will include an interpretation board as requested by members.

To assist members with the agenda item on hedgerows here are the links to CPRE and the Woodland Trust both of which websites explain the importance of maintaining and preserving our hedgerows. I have put this on the agenda as I feel as we are the custodians of so many hedges on our land and we can make a real difference.

<https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/countryside/hedgerows/item/download/460>

https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/mediafile/100210270/Wood-wise-summer-2014.pdf

 I’ve been receiving complaints and concerns about the lack of consideration of dog owners who walk their dogs on the Upton Dene estate and allow their pets to run lose. There are also numerous complaints about dog fouling. The open and green areas on the estate are the responsibility of the management company and Morris Homes. I am in contact with them to see what I can do to help the residents resolve the problems. I realise that there is nothing the Parish Council can practically do so this item is for your information.

The consultation about the double yellow lines on Bache Avenue has concluded with just over 50% of residents who responded being in favour of option 2 to extend the current lines.

As part of this project it is intended to remove the double yellow lines on Egerton Drive, that were put down to mitigate the effect of the closure Brook Lane Bridge. Residents were not consulted about this. Consequently I have been contacted by many Egerton Drive and Mill Lane residents who will be affected by the lifting of the lines. I have requested that Highways Officers reconsider their recommendations and find a compromise with which everyone is happy.

I have nothing to further to report at this time about the no 1 bus problem. I continue to receive complaints. It is regrettable that Stagecoach will not and are under no obligation to share information about the numbers of passengers, about how many people use each of their bus stops or about on which section of the journey the buses are full. This is very frustrating and makes fruitful interaction difficult.

There is undoubtedly a serious problem with parking at Upton Heath School at drop off and collection times. I do try to be in the area to observe particularly in the afternoon. It was disappointing last week to see that the driver of a workman’s wagon had completely ignored the new double yellow lines and that there was a bus at the stop although Stagecoach has said it would not run buses at these busy times. There were cars parked in every conceivable space. I am following this up and if I have anything to report by Monday I will give a verbal update.

I notice there are still many potholes needing to be repaired and that during last week’s heavy rain many fillings were washed away. I encourage our residents to report any potholes now before the winter weather arrives.

Jill Houlbrook

17.10.2018